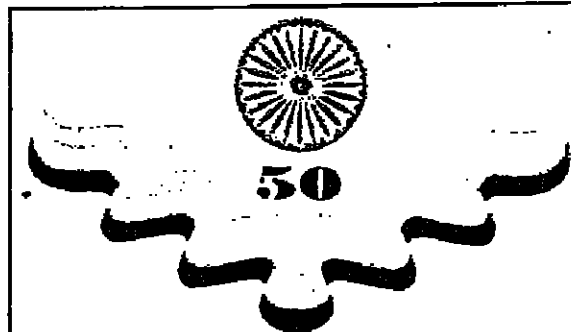


## Saudi, Yemeni border talks postponed

RIYADH (AFP) — A Saudi-Yemeni committee decided to postpone until November 9 talks on demarcating the two countries' border, the official Saudi news agency SPA said Friday. The decision was announced in a statement by the joint Saudi-Yemeni committee on border demarcation following a meeting in Jeddah. The two sides agreed that a "joint commission team" and civilian and technical teams should resume work on demarcating borders, the Saudi news agency reported. Saudi and Yemeni forces clashed July 19 on the disputed island of Al Duwayima creating a crisis between them. After the clash, in which three Yemeni soldiers were killed, both signed an agreement to avoid recourse to force to resolve the dispute. The land border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen has never been properly drawn.

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation  
جورديان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية، الراي.



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## King: Officials with immunity should not feel exempt from accountability

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein said in a message to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali that immunity accorded to public sector employees and civil servants should prompt them to perform their duties with honesty, integrity and dedication in a creative spirit. "The immunity granted to public sector officials should not give them the excuse to act irresponsibly or feel exempt from being held accountable for their negligence and failure to carry out their duty," the King said in the letter he sent to Majali on Thursday.

"We aim at safeguarding the interests of the nation and the Jordanian citizens, and this objective should rise above all other considerations and self interests," the King added. In the letter which was in reply to Majali's message expressing good wishes to him on the 46th anniversary of the King's accession to the Throne, King Hussein said: "Since the day of my accession to the Throne I vowed to dedicate my self and my life to serving the Jordanian family and I thank God for helping me to fulfil this pledge and for honouring me with shouldering the responsibility for the nation throughout the past eventful years."

Praising the prime minister for his outstanding services to the Kingdom, King Hussein said: "You have been one of the best citizens who have contributed to the construction of the nation and dedicated to serving their interests with utmost sincerity and in a spirit of altruism and self denial. You continue to remain the object of my confidence and respect and I am sure of your ability to act in the most distinguished manner and to shoulder responsibility with faithfulness. I share with you the keenness to enhance the principle of institutionalising public

administration and ensuring immunity for public officials." Thanking the prime minister for his good wishes on the 46th anniversary of his accession to the Throne, King Hussein said: "I express my gratitude to you for your noble feelings and your loyalty and I renew my confidence in you and take pride in your performance in all the positions you have assumed over the past decades." In reply to a letter he received from Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Zeid Rifai, King Hussein sent a message to Rifai thanking him for his letter.



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, shakes hands with a woman wearing traditional costume Friday, during the ninth annual Arts and Culture Festival in Fuheis, outside of Amman (AP photo)

## U.S. denies demanding halt to U.N. inspection in Iraq

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States acknowledged Friday that it had consulted U.N. experts on the timing of surprise weapons inspections in Iraq but denied it had demanded a halt to them to avert a new crisis with Baghdad.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright issued a strong denial of a report that she had urged U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) chief Richard Butler to scrap "challenge inspections" at two Iraqi sites suspected of holding forbidden weapons.

"We have had no change in our policy," said Albright. "We support UNSCOM in its inspections and fully support UNSCOM's right to decide where, when and how it conducts its inspections."

"I do not tell Chairman Butler what to do," she added at a State Department news conference. "There should be absolutely no doubt that the United States wants to see UNSCOM succeed." White House spokesman Michael McCurry earlier stressed that operational decisions were made solely by Butler.

"That is not our role," McCurry said, although he acknowledged that U.S. and U.N. officials "consulted about the best way to conduct their mission," and that timing was one of the issues that would be discussed. In New York UNSCOM also issued a terse statement saying "the allegations are false."

Butler, reached by telephone, said that any suggestion he



U.N. special envoy Prakash Shah shakes hands with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz in a bid to defuse the crises over U.N. weapons inspections Thursday in Baghdad. Shah has said he would deliver a message from U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to the Iraqi leadership, calling on it to reverse its decision to end cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors (AFP photo)

received by orders from Albright would be "a very considerable distortion of what took place," adding that no member of the U.N. Security Council, including the United States, "has purported to give me instructions."

The Washington Post said Friday that Albright urged Butler in an August 4 telephone call to scrap secret orders for the team to mount "challenge inspections" at two Iraqi sites suspected of holding forbidden weapons.

Any demand from the United

States for a halt to the inspections would fly in the face of the publicly stated U.S. headline demand for unconditional access to Iraqi sites and threats to use military force to enforce that stand.

The report came, however, amid waning international backing for the sanctions regime against Iraq and increasing doubts Washington could win support for an enforcement strike.

Arms Control Association Director Spurgeon Keeney noted that the alleged requests

on August 4 and 7 came just as Iraq froze all cooperation with the U.N. experts.

"You can easily imagine there were some cautions on how to proceed if it looked like it was leading up to a crisis," he said.

Dwindling support from Arab nations, France and Russia for the sanctions imposed following Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait also "complicates the U.S. position on this, particularly on how they are going to operate if the crisis escalates," said Keeney, whose group he stressed insists on full compliance with the

arms inspectors.

McCurry, meanwhile, insists that U.N. Security Council members were still open to all options—including military—and fully backed the U.S. position.

"There is strong support for the completion of the UNSCOM mission there and strong support for all the steps necessary to ensure compliance," he said.

But Washington has decidedly toned down the saber-rattling that accompanied the standoff that ended in February after U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan won an agreement to regain access to the sites.

When Iraq reneged on that agreement by halting cooperation with U.N. arms inspectors on August 5, U.S. officials were warning against "raising the temperature" before an official report on the situation from Butler.

The Security Council said Thursday it has decided to wait for its special envoy to Iraq to return from his current mission before deciding on its next moves to end a standoff, diplomats said.

Intelligence reports have suggested that the two Iraqi sites U.N. inspectors were targeting may have held forbidden weapons components and documents describing Iraqi efforts to conceal them, the daily said.

Officials who disclosed the information on Thursday regarded the abandoned leads in Iraq as the most promising in years.

## In first execution in '98, confessed killer hanged to death

By Rana Hussein  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 35-year-old Syrian man was hanged for murdering a couple and their toddler son in Amman in 1997, the first execution in Jordan this year, judicial sources said on Friday.

Fateh Jasi was sentenced to death in January for drugging and burning to death Jamal Abdo, 38, his wife Manal Othman and their two-year-old son Khalid at their apartment before burying them in a remote farm.

After his arrest on June 19, 1997, Jasi confessed to killing the Syrian family after

a financial dispute with Abdo's father.

Jasi was hanged inside a special room at the Swaga prison south of Amman at dawn on Thursday, according to an official who witnessed the execution.

He was pronounced dead after 18 minutes, he added.

Before his death, he asked for his body to be buried in Syria and said he was sorry for what he did. Eleven people, including three women, were hanged in the Kingdom in 1997 after being convicted of committing various crimes, sparking renewed calls from local and international human rights

activists to put an end to executions in Jordan.

Death sentences must be ratified by a Royal Decree before they are carried out.

Lawyer Asma Khader, one of Jordan's leading anti-execution voices, criticised the hanging as "a harsh punishment and a violation of human rights."

She said she was against such sentences because of the possibility of human error that could be committed by witnesses, investigators and judges.

Khader said all international studies on executions proved that this "kind of punishment does not deter individuals

from committing a murder."

"Therefore, I call for the abolishing of the death sentence," she told the Jordan Times on Friday. "Instead, I call for implementing rehabilitation programmes to help these individuals."

The London-based Amnesty International (AI) has repeatedly urged activists to appeal to His Majesty King Hussein and the government to commute all death sentences passed by Jordanian courts.

In numerous statements sent over the years, AI urged governments to work towards abolishing the death penalty by the 50th Anniversary of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1998.

AI does not condone crimes of violence but recognises the responsibility of governments to bring the perpetrators to justice, according to its statements.

However, AI opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment as specific in the UDHR.

Jasi was convicted by the Criminal Court of all five charges pressed against him — theft, molestation, arson, abduction, and premeditated murder (three counts).

## Egypt hopes Westerners will take Arab example to help resolve tourism doldrums

CAIRO (AP) — Last November's massacre of 58 foreigners at an ancient temple left Egyptian tourism in tatters. Now the country is getting a crush of visitors, most more drawn to shops and nightclubs than Pharaonic monuments.

Arabs from the oil-rich Gulf — men in their white dishdashas robes and women swathed in black — are crowding into Cairo hotels, restaurants and shopping malls.

While Gulf Arabs usually come in the summer to escape stifling heat at home, tourism officials say this year's numbers are far greater, in part because of Egypt's first Shopping and Tourism Festival that started in mid-July.

"Thank God, I am on my feet again. I thought it would take years to see tourists back," said Mohammed Osman, owner of Amarcos Travel in Cairo.

Osman, deputy head of Egypt's Chamber of the Tourism Industry, said that hotel occupancy is high in Cairo despite exceptional heat here and that most hotels are booked through September.

The shopping festival — an idea the Gulf emirate of Dubai originated two years ago — includes sales in stores and discounts of up to 40 per cent on EgyptAir flights and up to 50 per cent in hotels. It lasts until Aug. 20.

Egypt also used other ways to

draw Arab tourists.

After the killing of 58 foreigners Nov. 17 by Muslim radicals at Luxor in southern Egypt, the government quickly pleaded with fellow Arab states to encourage visits.

It also ran promotions in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Tourism Minister Mamdouh Al Beltagui repeated a simple message to his Arab neighbours: To help us, you must come as an example to Westerners that Egypt is safe.

But there are other reasons to visit Egypt.

While the Middle East is having a heat wave, this week's highs of 38 degrees Celsius in Cairo are well

below the 43 degree temperatures in Dubai or 46 in Mecca.

Life in Egypt also is more free-wheeling than in conservative Gulf states which enforce strict Islamic rules.

In Egypt, men and women swim together at beaches and hotel pools. Many restaurants serve alcohol, and night-clubs along Cairo's Pyramid Road are famous for belly dancers and other entertainments for male customers.

In fact, some rich Arab visitors temporarily "marry" young Egyptian women — an old practice to skirt the Islamic prohibition on premarital sex. While opposed by most Muslim clerics, it is still sometimes

employed.

Officials do not yet have figures on Arab visitors for the shopping festival. But in the first four months of the year, Arab tourism was up 14 per cent over 1997, and major hotels in Cairo are reporting occupancy rates this week of 90-100 per cent.

Carmen Razy, sales manager of the Ramsis Hilton Hotel, said the 1,200-plus rooms in the Ramsis and the nearby Nile Hilton were all full.

Still, it's uncertain whether the rush of Arabs will translate into a general recovery for tourism, which was Egypt's second leading foreign currency earner behind salaries sent home by Egyptian workers abroad.

Arabs made up only about 20 per

cent of the 3.6 million tourists to Egypt last year. And while Arab tourism was up 14 per cent in January-April over last year, overall tourism was down 33 per cent for the same period.

It's too early to say if Western tourists will return for the winter season starting in November — or if they will go back to Luxor. But many in the tourism industry believe Egypt's ancient monuments eventually will bring back Europeans, Americans and Asians.

"There is one place in the world where you can see the Pyramids, the sphinx and the pharaonic temples in Luxor and Aswan," said Razy, the Hilton sales manager.



The Armed Forces musical band plays on the arrival of Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, for the opening ceremony of 9th Fuheis Festival on Friday (Reuters photo)

political parties and the Arab Organisation for Human Rights in Jordan condemned the attack and sent a message to Prince Hassan seeking his intervention in this case saying that the attack marred the image of the country and its stability.

In his address, the Regent stressed that Jordan "is for all and remains as a pluralistic society," calling for "responsible and constructive dialogue as the best language that can safeguard our identity and our future."

The Regent urged Jordanians "to renounce hatred and greed and to move forward hand in hand reflecting the Jordanian unity and rallying behind the King shouldering responsibility with seriousness and loyalty."

Prince Hassan highly praised the Fuheis festival as a means for building civil society on the basis of Jordanian values calling for further cohesion in a spirit of love and affection among the

citizens of Jordan. In his address the Regent reassured the Jordanian people about the health condition of King Hussein saying that in his daily contacts the King enquires about the country and its people, expressing optimism over the future.

At the opening ceremony, Prince Hassan honoured a number of farmers for their distinguished work and for developing their land without using pesticides. He also received a token gift from the director of the Fuheis Sports and Cultural Club, Ayman Samawi, who delivered a speech welcoming the Regent and outlining the festival's programmes which he said display the traditional Jordanian way of life.

Attending the ceremony were the Speaker of the Senate Zeid Rifai, Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour and other prominent public figures.



## Taleban rule threatens permanent instability in region — Tehran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Domination of Afghanistan by the Taleban Islamist militia threatens the whole region with permanent instability, Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi said Friday.

"The Taleban are Pashtuns [the largest single ethnic group in Afghanistan but only around half the population] and cannot sideline all the other ethnic groups from the political scene" without sparking "continuing resistance," Kharazi said.

"In such circumstances, there will be no peace in the country," he told the official news agency IRNA.

Former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, at weekly prayers at Tehran University, also spoke out against the Taleban Friday.

"I warn the Taleban and those who support them

that we will not support instability and conspiracy along our borders," he said in reference to neighbouring Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

The Iranian foreign minister also condemned the human rights record of the Taleban and their brand of fundamentalist Sunni Islamists.

"The Taleban approach to Islam is wrong and constitutes a threat for the whole region," he said.

"The Taleban promote a false, mistaken view of Islam and violate human rights and particularly the rights of women," Kharazi said in a press statement from Turkmenistan, where he is on official visit.

Iran, which has a 945-kilometre border with Afghanistan, is strongly opposed to the Taleban,

## Rafsanjani rejects accusations about anti-U.S. bombings

IN A FIERY speech during weekly Friday prayers at Tehran University, former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani denounced accusations that Iran was behind the recent U.S. embassy bombings as "lies."

"All the accusations made against Iran are lies. We have also been victims of terrorism, and I call on the White House to listen to me, as a holy man, and to try to discover the true roots of terrorism," he said.

"Instead of offering a reward of two million dollars to find the attackers you should set a reward, of two million dollars or perhaps a Nobel prize, for whoever writes the best article on the causes of terrorist acts against the United States."

The U.S. "must try to discover why, each time somebody wants justice, they attack the Americans," he said.

"It's because you yourselves support terrorists in Israel, in southern Lebanon and also the People's Mujahadeen [Iran's main armed opposition movement]," Rafsanjani said.

"We condemn terrorism and are truly ready to fight it."

The Iranian foreign ministry last week officially condemned the U.S. embassy attacks which left at least 257 dead.

which it accuses of "genocide" against other Afghan groups, particularly the

Hazara community, who share Iran's Shiite Muslim faith.



POLICE BUS BOMBED IN ISTANBUL: A Turkish police officer Friday looks at the damage caused to a police bus as another sits behind the driving-wheel after a homemade bomb exploded and wounded four people near Istanbul University's literature faculty building. A policeman was also among those hurt by the blast, which took place beside a bus holding members of a permanently stationed crack police team (Reuters photo)

## Expulsions from Israeli unit after infiltration

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli platoon commander and soldier were expelled from their elite unit after a Lebanese guerrilla managed to slip into their heavily fortified post and escape alive, the army said Friday.

The incident in south Lebanon had caused an uproar in the Israeli military, with the chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Shaul Mofaz, calling it a "grave operational failure." In addition to the two expulsions, letters were being placed in the files of three senior officers — a lieutenant colonel, a colonel and a brigadier general — criticising them for failing to adequately prepare the paratroopers for their mission.

The infiltration occurred Sunday when a fighter from the Hizbollah guerrilla force made his way in broad daylight into an Israeli-held position in Israel's self-declared security zone.

According to the army's account, he encountered a paratrooper, apparently at close quarters, and the two grappled.

Another soldier shot and wounded the guerrilla, who threw down his assault rifle and escaped.

The army spokesman's office said it was decided after an inquiry that the soldier who initially confronted the guerrilla and his platoon commander — normally a second lieutenant — would no longer be allowed to serve as combat paratroopers.

## Israeli police arrest Muslim cleric in connection with settler shooting

NABLUS (AP) — Israel arrested a Muslim cleric from the West Bank suspected of involvement in the shooting deaths of two Jewish settlers last week, neighbours and Israeli Radio said Thursday.

Dirar Hamabni, a 37-year-old religious leader, was arrested late Tuesday from his village of Assira, close to the Jewish settle-

ment of Itzhar where the two Jewish settler students were killed while patrolling their settlement, Israeli radios reported.

Hamabni's neighbour Mohammad Shder said he was active in the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, and was expelled from Israel in 1992 along with hundreds of Islamic radicals, who were

allowed to return a year later.

Two other Palestinian men were arrested Wednesday, also in connection with the killings.

Also Thursday, an Israeli military court sentenced a Hebron resident to two life sentences for the murder of three Israelis in separate 1994 attacks, the Israeli army said.

## Three embassies in Beirut seek tighter security — official

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon has agreed to requests from at least three embassies in Beirut for tighter security after bombing attacks at U.S. missions in east Africa, a foreign ministry official said on Friday.

The official said the Egyptian and Turkish embassies asked for more guards and tighter security measures around their missions, and Lebanese authorities responded positively.

"The requests of some embassies came after the

bombing attacks against the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam," the official told reporters.

There was no official available in the Egyptian embassy to comment. A Turkish embassy official told Reuters there was no relation between its request and the bombings in Africa.

"It has nothing to do with the Americans. We asked for the arrangements before the bombings," the Turkish diplomat said.

The foreign ministry official did not name any other embassies which have asked for tighter security.

On Wednesday, a U.S. embassy official in Beirut said tighter security measures were taken at the compound and that Lebanese authorities were very cooperative after last week's bomb attacks in Kenya and Tanzania in which more than 250 people were killed.

An Egyptian trade office in Nairobi, which was near the U.S. embassy, was destroyed in the attack.

## Iraq has 'nothing to fear' from Turkish hydroelectric projects

ANKARA (AFP) — Iraq has nothing to fear from Turkish hydroelectric projects and should cooperate with Turkey instead of holding up building work, a Turkish minister said Friday.

"I call on Iraq to coordinate with us instead of holding up dam construction," State Minister Salih Yildirim said in a press briefing.

Yildirim is in charge of GAP, an ambitious irrigation and energy production project in the southeastern Anatolia region.

The project, costing a total of \$32 billion, has angered Syria and Iraq, who fear its effect on their economies and accuse Turkey of rationing water.

"Iraq accuses us of not coming clean in the talks, but that's not true... GAP is not a strategic project. It is purely humanitarian," Yildirim said.

Iraqi Irrigation Minister Mahmoud Djab Al Ahmad said Thursday that Iraq would resort to the courts to prevent Turkey from retaining water

from the Euphrates River by building dams on it.

The Turkish minister stressed a "limited dialogue" was under way with Syria and Iraq about the waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris.

Syria, which is also irrigated by the Euphrates, has also criticised Turkey for rationing its water by building dams on the river as part of the GAP project.

Turkey replied that it was allowing a sufficient amount of water through the dam for Syria's needs.

"Syria does not use water rationally. It should store water from the Euphrates in reservoirs," Yildirim added.

Turkey has almost completed the first half of the project to revive the Upper Mesopotamian plain with water, which involves 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric power plants.

The project was expected to be completed in 2005 but was put back to 2010 because of financial problems.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Ciller says no Islamist election alliance

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's conservative opposition leader Tansu Ciller has denied reports that she plans to forge a formal alliance with an Islamist party to fight general elections next April, the Anatolia news agency said. "The DYP [True Path Party] is not warring to alliances. We will come to power by ourselves," the agency quoted former prime minister Ciller as saying late on Thursday night. Her remarks followed press reports that she had held talks with main opposition Islamist leader Recai Kutan and other right-wing opposition figures on forming an election alliance. DYP leader Ciller confirmed the talks, but said they were aimed at setting up an informal cooperation against alleged corruption by coalition government parties, Anatolia said.

### Iraq calls for Arab efforts against embargo

BAGHDAD (AFP) — An official Iraqi newspaper Friday called on Arab nations to make a united stand in working toward lifting the eight-year embargo against Iraq, in effect since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. "We call on Arabs today to take a clear stand and put all their weight behind bringing the embargo to an end," said the Al Sawra newspaper. In so doing, the Arab World "will win one of the most important challenges it faces, and this victory will give it the confidence to handle future challenges, which are many and complicated," the paper added.

### Turkey demands release of Iranians

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey on Friday demanded the immediate release of Iranian diplomats recently seized by the Taleban militia in Afghanistan when they took control of a city in the north of the country. Ankara issued its statement after receiving official word from Iran of the diplomats' detention, a communiqué from the Turkish foreign ministry said adding that their detention was an "act of terrorism." "Turkey demands that foreign nationals be allowed to leave Afghanistan of their own free will in accordance with their status," the communiqué said.

### Eleven dead in Riyadh fire

RIYADH (AFP) — Eleven family members were found dead after a fire in a Riyadh home, relatives said Friday. The victims, a woman and 10 children between the ages of two and 15, were asphyxiated as the blaze ripped through their home early Thursday while they were sleeping. The cause of the deadly fire has not yet been determined. Fires happen frequently in the Gulf region, where temperatures regularly surpass 47 degrees Celsius in August.

## Egyptian extremists kill three Copts in south

CAIRO (AP) — Suspected Islamists shot and killed three Coptic Christian brothers on their farm in southern Egypt, police officials said Thursday.

The attack by three gunmen took place Wednesday night near the village of Damshir in Minya province, 190 kilometres south of Cairo.

The body of another villager was

found Thursday in a sugar cane field on the outskirts of Damshir and police suspect he was killed by the same gunmen as they made their escape.

They identified the man as Ezzat Ali Hassan, a Muslim. It was not clear what was the motive for his killing.

The Christian victims were identified as Farag Gabr Shehata and his

brothers Yaaqoub and Wahib. Police said that two other farmers who had been with the Shehata brothers fled when the shooting started and were safe.

The interior ministry, which is responsible for internal security, issued a statement late Wednesday saying the attackers were being sought.

Islamists have waged a campaign since 1992 to try to overthrow Egypt's secular government and replace it with Islamic rule. Their targets have included Coptic Christians, foreign tourists and police.

Some 1,250 people have died in the violence, most of them police and extremists.

## JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO  
15:10 Cartoon — Postman Pat  
15:30 ...Clowning Around  
16:00 ...Drama — Neighbours  
16:30 ...Doc — Scandi Nature  
17:00 French Programme — "Faut Pas Réver"  
18:00 ...Acapulco Bay  
19:00 ...Le Journal  
19:15 French Programme — "Le Ciel de Colomb"  
19:30 ...News headlines  
19:35 Quiz Show — You Bet Your Life  
19:55 ...Cinema, Cinema  
20:30 ...Prism  
21:10 ...Drama — Sirens  
22:00 ...News in English  
22:30 Feature film — "The Secretary"  
23:59 ...Country Music  
00:30 ...End of T.X.

## PRAYER TIMES

04:30 ...Fajr  
05:54 ...Sunrise/Duha  
12:40 ...Dhuhr  
16:19 ...Asr  
19:26 ...Maghrib  
20:50 ...Isha

## CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel.  
4632785

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590  
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366  
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811  
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751  
Amman International Church Tel. 865897  
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5683404  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932  
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440  
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138  
Church of Presentation, Sweifeh Tel. 5920146  
The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757  
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190  
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 892679  
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052  
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331  
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology  
Relative hot weather conditions will persist today with temperatures higher than average by 2-3 degrees centigrade and winds northerly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 22/35  
Aqaba 28/40  
Deserts 20/39  
Jordan Valley 28/40  
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 35 Aqaba 39. Humidity readings: Amman 43 per cent, Aqaba 48 per cent.  
Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:  
Ajloun 28  
Jerash 34  
Umm Qays 34  
Madaba 34  
Petra 36  
Dead Sea 41

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

## NIGHT DUTY AMMAN:

Dr. Youssef Rashid 4875792  
Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 4758848  
Dr. Ahmad Maana 539413  
Dr. Walid Masri 5675485  
Firas pharmacy 5661912  
Al Asema pharmacy 4637055  
Nairohki pharmacy 4623672  
Al Salam pharmacy 4636730  
Yacoub pharmacy 4644945  
Shamsani pharmacy 4637660  
Najib pharmacy 53477632  
IRBID:  
Dr. Issam Salih 246858  
Al Quds pharmacy (—)  
ZARQA:  
Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799  
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

## EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111  
Civil Defence Department 5661111  
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341  
Civil Defence Emergency 199  
Rescue Police 192 4621111 4637777  
Fire Brigade 4617101  
Blood Bank 4775121  
Highway Police 5343402  
Traffic Police 4896390  
Public Security Dept. 4630321  
Hotel Complaints 5605800  
Price Complaints 5661176  
Waste & Sewage Complaints 4897467  
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111  
Telephone Information (directo-

## HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199  
The Islamic Abdi 5666131/7  
Hussien Medical Centre Tel. 5858856  
Luzmila 4630195  
Khalidi Maternity 4644281/6  
Akileh Maternity 4642441/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362  
Malhas, J. Amman 4636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071  
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131  
University Hospital 5353444  
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667227/9  
Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164/6  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3  
Al-Bashir 4775111/26  
Army, Marka 891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50  
Amal Hospital 5674155  
ZARQA:  
ry assistance 121  
Overseas Calls 010230  
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101  
Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101  
Jordan Television 4773111  
Radio Jordan 4774111  
Water Authority 5680100  
J. Electricity Authority 5815615  
Electric Power Co. 4636381  
RJ Flight Information 44-53200  
Queen Alia Int. Airport 44-53200

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560  
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990  
IRBID:  
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275  
Ibn Al Nafess Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111  
FOR THE TRAVELLER  
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights is obtained on telephone (44) 52700 or (44) 523250.

## ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
07:10 ...Tehran (RJ)

08:30 ...Damascus (RJ)  
09:45 ...New Delhi (RJ)  
10:25 ...Beirut (RJ)  
10:30 ...Karachi, Dubai (RJ)  
10:45 ...Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
11:10 ...Colombo (RJ)  
15:00 ...Istanbul (RJ)  
17:30 ...London (RJ)  
17:45 ...New York, Amsterdam (RJ)  
20:15 ...Cairo (RJ)  
23:00 ...Milan (RJ)  
23:05 Madrid, Larnaca (add)(RJ)  
23:30 ...Berlin, Frankfurt (RJ)  
02:30 ...Madrid (RJ)  
05:30 ...Bangkok (RJ)

Other Flights  
06:05 London, Damascus (BA)  
13:00 ...Riyadh (SV)  
14:10 Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)  
15:05 ...Vienna (OS)  
16:25 ...Dubai, Muscat (EK)  
18:40 ...Beirut (ME)  
19:00 ...Paris (AF)  
19:05 ...Frankfurt (LH)  
23:35 ...Cairo (MS)  
23:40 ...Amsterdam (KL)  
01:05 London, Damascus (BA)  
02:05 ...Belgrade (JU)  
03:00 ...Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW)  
10:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)  
18:00 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)  
23:25 Aqaba (Marka Airport) (RW)

## DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
06:45 ...Beirut (RJ)  
09:40 ...Istanbul (RJ)  
10:35 ...Madrid (add) (RJ)  
11:45 ...Berlin, Frankfurt (RJ)  
12:00 ...Geneva, Milan (RJ)  
12:00 ...Amsterdam, Chicago  
Detroit (RJ)  
12:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)  
13:00 ...Madrid (RJ)  
13:10 ...Paris (RJ)  
13:15 Brussels, Amsterdam (RJ)  
14:05 ...London (RJ)  
16:30 ...Cairo (RJ)  
21:05 ...Riyadh (RJ)  
21:20 ...Bombay (RJ)  
22:00 ...Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)  
00:45 ...Jeddah (RJ)  
01:15 ...Dhahran (add) (RJ)

Other Flights  
07:35 ...Damascus, London (BA)  
14:30 ...Riyadh (SV)  
15:00 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)  
15:50 ...Vienna (OS)  
19:00 ...Dubai (EK)  
20:00 ...Beirut (ME)  
00:40 ...Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)  
13:10 ...Belgrade (JU)  
04:00 ...Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW)  
08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
09:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
21:30 Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)





**REGENT PERFORMS FRIDAY PRAYERS:** HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, performs Friday prayers at Abu Nusseir Mosque. The sermon, which was delivered by Sheikh Rafiq Khatib, from the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, was dedicated to national unity. Sheikh Khatib reminded those attending of His Majesty King Hussein's efforts to maintain holy sites, particularly Al Aqsa Mosque. He praised the efforts exerted by Prince Hassan to defend the spirit of Islam in the international arenas. The sermon was also dedicated to King Hussein's speedy recovery and safe return home. The prayers were also attended by HRH Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, King Hussein's advisor on Tribal Affairs, and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi (Photo by Boghos)

## Ministers lock horns over remarks about water crisis

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Minister of Information Abdullah Ensour and Minister of Health Ashraf Kurdi appear to be engulfed in a media tug-of-war over the six-week-old water contamination crisis.

The issue was highlighted on Thursday, when Kurdi asked Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali to intervene after Ensour told a press briefing earlier this week that the resignation of the health minister hinged on the outcome of an investigation into the water crisis.

The issue began when Ensour asked the official Jordan News Agency, Petra, on Tuesday to run a denial of the comments he made about Kurdi which were carried by the Arabic daily Al Ra'i, newspaper editors said.

Petra quoted Ensour as saying he would take the paper to court and supply the judiciary with tapes of the two-hour meeting, they added.

Al Ra'i contacted Majali's office and told his aides that it could provide the court with a transcript of the same tape that carried Ensour's statement, they said.

Hours later, Petra ran an urgent news item asking subscribers to cancel the report carrying Ensour's denial.

"The urgent message was run after a government offi-

cial listened to the tape in question and discovered that Ensour had in fact said that Kurdi's resignation depended on the results of an investigation into the crisis," one editor told the Jordan Times.

The water crisis forced Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin to resign last week.

Several local dailies recently stepped up criticism of both Ensour and Kurdi, claiming they mismanaged the crisis.

Ensour was serving as acting prime minister when the crisis broke on July 10 after residents of Amman, especially the western areas, complained of foul-smelling and discoloured water supplies.

While stating that water supplies were not contaminated, Kurdi urged citizens to boil water for a minute before drinking it — a recommendation that further added to a nationwide scare.

Independent journalists who taped Ensour's weekly press briefing on Monday, days after Majali returned home from visiting His Majesty King Hussein in the United States, insisted his comments about Kurdi were not taken out of context.

Before Haddadin's resignation, newspapers often quoted Haddadin and Kurdi as defending their ministries' efforts to ensure clean and safe water supplies.

The latest Ensour-Kurdi tussle reflects increased tension in the 23-member government, which has been facing growing public criticism over its handling of press freedoms, economic reforms and the water crisis.

King Hussein told Majali in a state of letters made public that those found responsible will be punished.

Meanwhile, Kurdi told Shihan weekly he was ready to cooperate with a government committee investigating the water crisis.

"If the committee asks for me, I and the entire ministry will be ready to face it with documents," he said on Thursday.

Responding to a question, he denied he had submitted his resignation.

"I have not submitted my resignation and I will not, because I see no reason that prompts such a move. All my ministry's reports were accurate," he added.

He said Ensour was aware of the water crisis from the minute it unfolded and added that his ministry was the party to discover the presence of large numbers of worms in water supplies.

The investigating committee, grouping several officials and experts, is due to submit its report on August 20. It was formed upon orders from HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, earlier this month.

## International rights groups send further appeals to Senate over draft press law

By Amy Henderson  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two international press freedoms groups today extend one of their final appeals to legislators to reject or substantially amend the draft press and publications law now before the Senate.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF), in two letters to the president of the Upper House, Zeid Rifai, urged the Senate, where debate on the draft should begin tomorrow, to reconsider the draft altogether or amend the articles in the draft.

In a press release attached to the letter, Hanny Megally, executive director of the Middle East and North Africa division of the New York-based HRW, said that the draft "is an anachronism."

"News and other information from around the world is freely available on the Internet, but the government is attempting to censor what local newspapers can publish and control what books and foreign newspapers Jordanians can read," Mr. Megally said.

HRW, governed and advised by a host of prominent international journalists and human rights activists, said it was "deeply disappointed" with the draft press and publications law.

"If the law is enacted without substantial revisions, we fear that it will pose a direct threat to freedom of expression in

Jordan, and will place press freedom and academic freedom at particular risk," the letter to the Senate said.

The Lower House of Parliament last week finished its second reading of the draft press law, after substantial amendments were introduced to the government's proposed legislation by the House's National Guidance Committee. The plenary made further amendments to the draft, such as dropping a requirement for accreditation in news reporting on the grounds that the availability of information was a prerequisite for "accurate" reporting. However, it tended to side with the government on most, if not all, of the most crucial points in the law.

It upheld the government's request for a categorical prohibition of a range of vaguely worded topics. For example, Article 5 prohibits the publication of anything that "contradicts the principles of freedom and national responsibility, human rights and the values of the Arab Islamic Nation."

Article 37 provides an additional comprehensive ban on 14 topics, including anything that concerns the Armed Forces or security services; disparages the King or the Royal family; harms national unity, instigates strikes, sit-ins or public gatherings; degrades, libels or slanders the heads of Arab, Islamic or friendly states; or shakes confidence in the national currency, along with a host of others. Journal-

ists who violate these bans are liable for penalties ranging from JD5,000 to JD10,000.

The court, under the draft as it stands, also has the right to order the closure of a newspaper while any case against it is pending. This is the first time in the history of Jordan's press that such a rigorous article has been introduced to any press law, including those that existed under martial law, which ended in 1989.

Journalists, editors and human rights activists charge that these terms are so vaguely worded that the articles can be used to harass journalists who report critically on domestic and foreign policy issues.

HRW contends that Jordan, as a signatory to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), must more clearly define these content bans, rather than leaving editors and journalists to speculate as to their meaning. The organisation said the articles are designed to impose a regime of self-censorship on the press.

It also claims that the draft violates the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, to which Jordan is a signatory. According to the ICCPR, such restrictions on the press must be "necessary" and narrowly framed, while the burden of proving "necessity" lies with the state.

HRW also noted Article 39, which allows judicial authorities to ban reporting on trials and criminal investigations if

such reporting would "influence" the proceedings. The ICCPR permits such bans only within very specific boundaries for reasons of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, or when the interest of the private lives of the [concerned] parties requires [a ban], or when the court finds an extraordinary circumstance "where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice."

The government, when drafting the law, did not limit its text to newspapers and magazines. Instead, it appeared to compose the law with the intention of placing a comprehensive regime of control over the entire flow of information in the Kingdom.

The draft prohibits the printing or circulation of books in Jordan without government approval. This applies to imported material as well as local. HRW has asserted that these articles "open the door for the state to ban books that include material on the prohibited topics in Articles 5 and 37."

Additionally, under the draft, research institutes and public opinion polling centres are no longer allowed to receive financial assistance from Jordanian or foreign donors to undertake study or research projects without the approval of the minister of information. The article will effectively allow the executive to control the work of most institutions in the country, since they are

heavily reliant on foreign funding.

HRW said the provision constitutes "excessive government interference in internal affairs of non-governmental organisations by shifting control over [programmes and funding] to the state."

RSF concluded its letter to Rifai by saying that the law, if adopted as written, will "be in total contradiction to the democratisation process undertaken by Jordan."

HRW and RSF along with the Committee to Protect Journalists in New York and the London-based Article 19, have issued dozens of critical statements on the executive's interference in media and information affairs since the government in May 1997 enacted temporary amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law.

The Senate will be the last official body to read the law. Any amendments by the Upper House should be returned to the Lower House for approval, according to the Constitution. Otherwise, the draft, when approved, must then be enacted by Royal Decree.

The Upper House is generally not known for making substantial amendments to legislation endorsed by the elected representatives of the Lower House, and journalists and editors said last week that they were not hopeful that the Senate would make any significant changes to the draft's text.

## JPA condemns attack on journalist, asks for release of detained editor

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan Press Association (JPA) has condemned last week's attack on Nahed Hattar, chief editor of the Arabic weekly Al Mithaq, and criticised the manner in which the chief editor of Jordan's only satirical weekly, "Abed Rabbo," was arrested.

In a statement published in the Arabic press on Friday, JPA President Seif Sharif said that the JPA council has "with regret noticed recurrent attacks on fellow journalists and writers by unidentified assailants" and that it condemns such measures in a country governed by law.

"We call on all these parties to stop resorting to physical violence and to go to the association or the courts if a conflict arises," he added.

HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, also criticised Sunday's attack on Hattar. "In Jordan... we do not wish to see any person taking the law into their own hands or taking advantage of

the King's absence to tamper with the nation's security and stability," the Regent said at the opening ceremony of Al Fuhais Arts Festival Thursday.

Four unidentified assailants attacked Hattar as he was returning home in Jabal Hussein last Sunday with his wife and eight-year-old son.

Hattar, a leftist and a vehement critic of many past and present government officials, said he felt unconscious after being beaten.

In a statement issued the day after the attack, Hattar blamed the attack on a former prime minister, the PLO's Fateh movement, a former government minister, and the Israeli embassy in Amman.

He said the four parties must have been angered by his recent articles published in the paper and attacking them.

A coalition of opposition political parties and the Arab Organisation for Human Rights in Jordan condemned the attack last week and sent a message to Prince Hassan seeking his intervention in

the case, saying that the attack marred the image of the country and its stability.

In another development, the U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) also sent a letter to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali condemning the recent attack on Hattar.

The CPJ called on government officials to hold thorough investigations and to bring the assailants to justice.

Hattar has appeared in court several times in the past years on charges of violating articles of the press law, and the water pollution crisis, which according to analysts may have harmed Jordan's image abroad.

The JPA statement also criticised the manner in which Hussein Emoush, Abed Rabbo's chief editor, was arrested last Monday, and asked for his immediate release.

"The association asks all responsible sides to grant journalists their basic right to freedom of expression as stipulated by the Constitution, and to abide by the rules while interrogating possible breaches of the

press law," it said.

"We call for the immediate release of our colleague Hussein Emoush and hope that journalists will not be subjected to such treatment in the future," it added.

Emoush was taken from his home early Monday morning by security forces for unspecified reasons.

Abed Rabbo has in its last two editions attacked more than one government official and put them under fire for recent allegations of mis-handling the economy, legislation such as the press law, and the water pollution crisis, which according to analysts may have harmed Jordan's image abroad.

The paper's managing editor said it has contacted several human rights organisations as well as Lower House deputies to help ensure Emoush's release and put an end to such "recurrent measures against journalists."

Emoush's wife told the Jordan Times yesterday that so far no reasons have been given for her husband's arrest and no one has been able to contact him.

## Women's group to build public park on former garbage dump

AMMAN (Petra) — A local women's group has assumed responsibility for transforming part of an old garbage dump into a public garden in what is seen as a pioneering step on the part of women's organisations in Jordan.

Nadia Masoud, president of the Productive Women Society (PWS), which is sponsoring the project in the east Amman district of Marka, said the society is receiving help from the Amman Municipality, which donated 50 dunums of land for the project, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which will provide \$46,000 to partly finance the scheme.

The Ministry of Agriculture will provide tree saplings and tree-planting expertise, while the Jordan Environment Society will donate equipment for a drip-irrigation system for the trees to be planted on the site, she added.

Masoud said the 50 dunums of land on which the park will be set up is part of a 173-dunum plot of land that served as a garbage dump until it was shut down by the municipality in 1989.

The project aims at creating a park for the benefit of the local inhabitants, whom Masoud said are expected to make contributions to the estimated \$150,000 project.

She said the two-year project will include green playing grounds for children, a football field, and areas for recreational activities.

Masoud said the PWS has completed the topographic, environmental and field studies and was ready to begin the project.

She added that the society will pursue efforts to raise sufficient funds from Jordan's main organisations and firms for the "much-needed" facility in Marka.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Official denies reports on W. Bank withdrawal plan

AMMAN (Petra) — An official at the Prime Ministry denied media reports published Thursday that Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali told the Lower House of Parliament that the government advised the Palestinians to accept an Israeli withdrawal offer of 10 per cent from the West Bank. "The statement attributed to the prime minister by this newspaper, that Jordan advised the Palestinians to accept the Israeli proposal to withdraw from 10 per cent of the West Bank with three per cent as reserves, is baseless and does not conform to Jordan's supportive stand vis-à-vis the Palestinians," said the official, who was not named.

### Srouf leaves for Tehran

AMMAN (Petra) — The speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, Sa'd Hayel Srouf, on Friday left for Tehran on a four-day official visit in reply to an invitation from his Iranian counterpart, Abdullah Nateq-Nouri. Srouf will hold talks with Iranian President Mohammad Khatami and other Iranian officials on bilateral relations.

### Seminar on drug addiction ends

AMMAN (Petra) — A seminar on drug addiction in Jordan concluded recently with recommendations for a national campaign involving the public and private sectors to deal with the issue. The three-day seminar, which ended on Wednesday, called for reviving the work of a national committee on fighting drugs, which would direct its attention toward involving the country's various institutions in programmes to help tackle this issue, according to a statement issued following the seminar's conclusion. The seminar also urged the government to monitor public cafes where people smoke argila (water pipe) and other locations suspected of attracting drug addicts and called on the Ministry of Education to introduce curricula to raise awareness among students on the economic, health and social dangers inherent in drugs.

## what's

### CONCERTS

\* Musical performance by Nadine Balbeisi (soprano), and Mohammad Othman Sidqi (piano) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.  
\* Concert by the Arab Jordanian Ansar Party marking His Majesty King Hussein's accession to the Throne at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

### SHABIB FESTIVAL/ZARQA

\* Performance by the Greater Amman Band for Popular Art at 6:30 p.m.

\* Poetry recital at 7:30 p.m.  
\* Performance by Samarra'i Group at 7:50 p.m.  
\* Poetry recital at 8:30 p.m.  
\* Concert by Hisham Abbas at 9:10 p.m.

### EXHIBITIONS

\* Summer display of products at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre/Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Sagra (Tel. 569-9141/2), until Aug. 31.  
\* "Miniatures in Humanities and Environment" by Walid Nasrallah at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Utheina, until Aug. 25 (Tel. 5526932).



## Cambodian opposition member killed as vote controversy continues

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — A leading Cambodian opposition party claimed one of its activists, a nephew of a newly-elected member of parliament, was killed Friday in political murder designed to look like a traffic accident.

The incident occurred shortly after the Constitutional Council refused to accept opposition appeals of election complaints rejected by poll authorities, contributing to the possibility of a governmental crisis.

The Sam Rainsy Party said the death of Pung Sokhom, 25, followed repeated harassment and attempted bribery of his uncle Monh Siyonn, president of the Phnom Penh branch of the party and MP elect, designed to get him to join the de facto ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) of strongman Hun Sen.

"This was not an accident," Monh Siyonn told reporters, describing witness accounts of the incident in which his nephew, leaving the Sam Rainsy Party headquarters on a small motorbike, was pushed into an oncoming truck by a white car which then sped away.

"It is too much of a coincidence," he said, adding the accident occurred after he had turned down inducements of cash, bodyguards, a new car and a cellular phone to betray the party and was threatened.

Monh Siyonn's allegations of bribery and threats were printed Friday in opposition newspapers and

human rights officials confirmed they had spoken with him and were looking into the case.

Police officials immediately denied there was any suspicion of political motive in the accident, saying the truck driver was now in custody as he had tried to flee the scene and the vehicle had been impounded.

"This had nothing to do with politics," said Kong Saran, the deputy chief of Phnom Penh police in charge of traffic and public security.

He added that a police official would appear on television later in the day to explain the circumstances. Sam Rainsy, as well as his opposition ally deposed co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh, leader of the royalist FUNCINPEC party, have accused the CPP of threatening their members and encouraging defections of their MPs-elect following last month's election.

A CPP official "absolutely" denied the accusations, saying he was unaware of the traffic accident.

"Absolutely not," said Prak Sokhom, a senior advisor to Hun Sen when asked if the party was trying to buy off opposition members.

Sam Rainsy, however, accused the CPP and, in particular, Hun Sen, of being desperate enough to try anything to keep full control of the country.

According to unofficial preliminary election results, the CPP is set to win 64 of the 122 parliamentary seats up for grabs, a majority, but

not the two-thirds needed to form a government on its own.

Sam Rainsy and FUNCINPEC, set to win 15 and 43 seats respectively, have refused as premature Hun Sen's offers to form a coalition, citing hundreds of outstanding complaints of vote-fraud and polling irregularities.

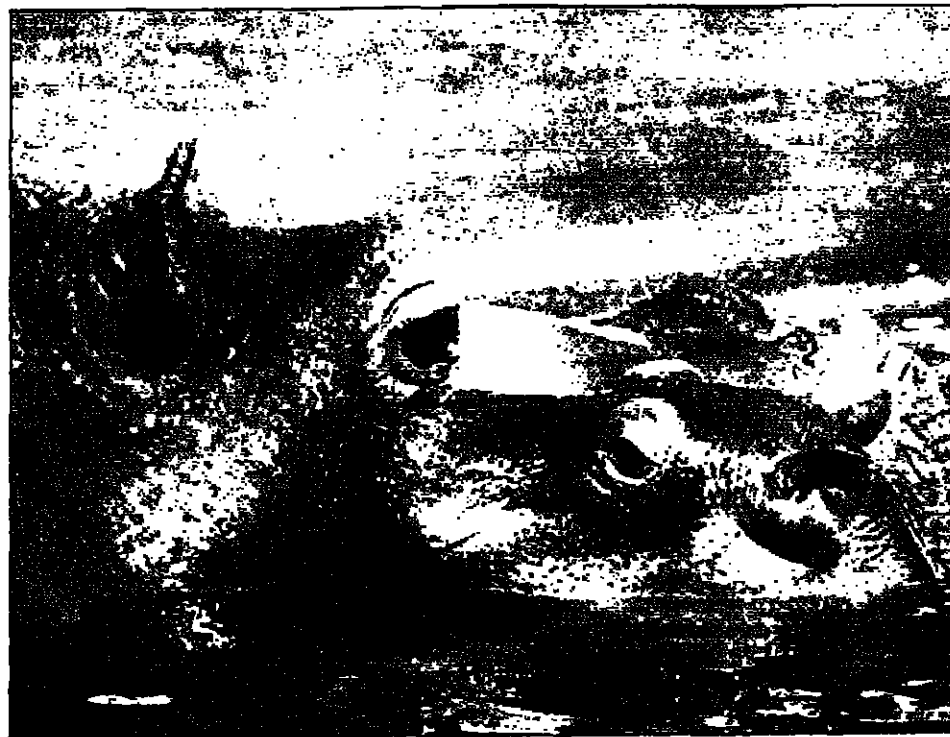
Clerks at the Constitutional Council, Cambodia's highest appeals body, however, turned away a good percentage of the appeals — which deal with some of the opposition's most serious charges of vote fraud and irregularities — saying they had not been submitted properly.

The clerks would not speak to reporters but could be heard telling Sam Rainsy Friday that most of the appeals could not be accepted as the National Election Committee (NEC) had not formally rejected them.

Tuesday, after summarily dismissing as baseless more than two-thirds of the opposition's complaints, the NEC declared its work complete and formally rejected remaining complaints, citing lack of evidence.

The appeals accepted by the Constitutional Council appeared to be the ones officially rejected by the NEC Tuesday, prompting Sam Rainsy to allege obfuscation on the part of the council.

"They say I have to wait for an official rejection from the NEC, but if a complaint is not dealt with (by NEC), I have the right to appeal," he said.



A new born hippopotamus swims next to its mother 'Helvetia' on a sunny day in Basle's zoo. The young hippo, which has not been given a name yet, was born early August 9 (Reuters photo)

## Before Starr and Congress, Clinton faces the biggest decision

WASHINGTON (AP) — As a special prosecutor nears a decision on whether to send an impeachment report to U.S. legislators, President Bill Clinton and a small circle of legal advisers are weighing exactly how he will describe his relationship with a former White House intern to a grand jury.

An adviser familiar with some aspects of the preparations said one option being discussed would have the president acknowledge some sort of personal relationship with Monica Lewinsky, possibly even sexual. But he could argue that he told the truth in the Paula Jones sexual harassment lawsuit when he denied a sexual relationship based on a one-paragraph definition of sex provided by Jones' lawyers.

The source, who spoke Thursday on condition of anonymity, said under this option Clinton could signal he had something more than the ordinary relationship with Lewinsky but refuse to give specific or graphic details, arguing it was a private matter that was not the business of prosecutors.

"It's something being discussed both inside (the preparation room) and outside," the source said, cautioning that all the preparations were fluid and no decisions had been made.

Other advisers say they are aware that option had been

considered by advisers but cautioned the president faced ideas from a variety of sources, including standing steadfastly by his original denial when he testified Monday to Kenneth Starr's grand jury on closed-circuit TV.

The sources added that only Clinton, the first lady, private lawyers David Kendall and Nicole Seligman and former Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor, now advising the president as a private lawyer, likely would know the final outcome. All five have refused to comment.

What everyone agrees is that Clinton's answers to the independent counsel's questions carry the highest stakes: the possibility of impeachment proceedings that could hamper or even cripple that last two years of his presidency, 25, already has told the grand jury that she had a sexual relationship with Clinton that included several encounters inside the White House, and discussed various cover stories to conceal the relationship, according to legal sources.

But those sources said Lewinsky contends she never was asked outright by Clinton to lie under oath.

Prosecutors are investigating whether Clinton committed perjury in the Jones case in January when he denied the sexual relationship with Lewinsky, and conspired with

the intern or others to obstruct the Jones lawsuit.

For two weeks, national Republican and Democratic figures have urged Clinton to admit to a sexual relationship with Lewinsky as a way of sparing himself and the country from impeachment proceedings.

But closer to the president, advisers have recommended a series of more complex options that range from standing firmly behind his denial or refusing to discuss the nature of the relationship to giving some sort of acknowledgement — from a complete apology to a partial admission — he had a personal relationship with the former intern.

Most advisers say privately they are resigned to the fact that Starr will forward the issue to Congress, where future strategy could have as much to do with politics as legalities.

Starr is expected to narrow any such report solely to evidence of perjury, obstruction of justice and witness tampering in the Lewinsky case, rather than the other aspects of his Whitewater investigation. His staff already has begun drafting possible language for such a report.

But no decisions are expected to be made until after Clinton, the last central witness to provide testimony, gives his account to the grand jury.

## China coal mine blasts kill 32

BEIJING (R) — Two gas explosions in small coal mines in northern China have killed 32 people and injured six, the Workers' Daily said Friday.

Rescue workers had saved 40 miners and found 25 bodies in a village-run coal mine in Shanxi province's Zhenyuan county after the blast on Aug. 10. Four miners were injured, it said.

One survivor said he felt hot temperatures and still air in the pit before the blast. The cause of the explosion was under investigation, it said.

The blast was the fourth this year in the country's 380 village-run coal mines, many of which had no licenses and were run with no safety equipment, it said.

In a separate report, the newspaper said six farmers were killed in a gas explosion in a privately run coal mine in northwestern Ningxia's Pingluo county on Aug. 8.

The foreman of the mine also died and two other colleagues were injured from toxic fumes when they rushed in to rescue the miners, ignorant of safety precautions, the report said.

Police had detained Chen Fulu, who had illegally opened the mine, it said. It gave no more details.

At least 150 miners were killed earlier this year in a coal pit blast in northeastern Liaoning and spate of explosions in central Henan province.

Accidents in China's poorly regulated coal mines killed more than 2,000 miners last year, up nearly 30 per cent from the previous year, official media have said.

## Dyke bursts in central China city kill 78, injure thousands

BEIJING (AFP) — Yangtze River flooding has killed 78 people and injured thousands of others in central China's Jiangxi city since June, a municipal government spokesman said Friday.

Two major dyke bursts hit the city last week as flood levels were peaking, but officials ranking all the way up to Jiangxi provincial governor Shu Shengyou had denied any casualties resulted.

The spokesman said a total of 28,600 people fell ill or were injured by flooding in the city — located in an especially flood-prone section of the Yangtze.

A total of 3.46 million residents of the city were affected, he added. A main river dyke burst last Friday, losing a deluge that put a newly industrialised suburban area in western

Jiangxi under, up to four metres of water.

It took hundreds of emergency workers five days of round-the-clock efforts to stop up the 60-metre gap. Soldiers and armed police at one point used explosives to sink eight 1,000-tonne barges in an emergency attempt to plug the breach, but the turbulent waters had swept aside one of the barges, widening the gap.

Another breach overwhelmed a dyke in Jiangxi's Jiangzhou district just days earlier.

While official reports said only two died in that incident, Chinese journalists said they saw scores of bodies floating and piled up in the area.

Throughout this summer's flooding disaster in China, officials have typically hid the full extent of casualties and damage from indi-

vidual incidents, preferring to issue general estimates for large regions at later dates.

The official death toll from the floods across the country, which began unusually early in May and until recently was focused in southern and central China, stands at 2,000.

The official Xinhua news agency reported Friday that 3,000 residents evacuated immediately after last Friday's breach had begun returning to their homes in the western part of the city.

Troops poured 1,000 cubic metres of stone and clay to reinforce the framework filling the breach, it said.

Local experts are mulling whether or not to build a third defensive dam in the city.

Falling water levels on the Yangtze Friday brought a temporary reprieve after weeks of high alert in central China.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### SPD still leads Kohl's Christian Unions in the polls

BONN (AFP) — Gerhard Schroeder's social democrat SPD party holds a three-point lead over Chancellor Helmut Kohl's CDU-CSU Christian Unions, 45 days ahead of the general elections on Sept. 27, according to a poll published Friday in the German daily Die Welt. The breakdown of results indicates that if the election were held now, the SPD would get 41 per cent of the vote, followed by the CDU-CSU with 38 per cent, the Green party on 6 per cent and the Free Democrats (FDP) 5 per cent. The two far right parties, the Republicans and Gerhard Frey's DVU party came in with two and one per cent respectively. The poll of 1,000 people showed unemployment, social problems and security were the top concerns, in that order. In a similar poll 10 days ago, the SPD recorded 40 per cent of votes, again three points ahead of the Christian Unions. The FDP and the Greens both got 6 per cent.

### Police link Protestant paramilitaries to shooting of Catholics

LONDONDERRY, Northern Ireland (AFP) — Police in Northern Ireland Friday said they suspected the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) was behind the shooting of two Roman Catholics in the province last month. The UDA, one of the main Protestant paramilitary organisations, is officially observing a ceasefire, a position which allows for the early release of its members in prison under the April 10 peace agreement.

### Mars meteorite contains no traces of life

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Martian meteorite ALH-84001 which NASA claimed carried traces of primordial life contains no such material, researchers from Hawaii University said in a study published Friday. What NASA specialists took to be fossil evidence of Martian microbes 3.6 billion years old, head researcher Ed Scott said, are formations caused by a high-temperature impact too extreme for any living organism. The study, published in Meteoritic and Planetary Science, refutes the conclusions drawn by a National Aeronautics and Space Administration team headed by David McKay at the Johnson Space Centre in Houston, Texas. McKay's researchers analysed an apple-size Martian meteorite found in August 1996 in the Antarctic, where it had fallen some 13,000 ago. They theorised that microscopic grooves criss-crossing the structure had been formed by microorganisms known as carbonates. "We conclude that the existing carbonates formed at high temperatures by impact heating of carbonates that had formed earlier," Scott said in the research paper.

### Landslides claim 40 lives in northern India

LUCKNOW, India (R) — At least 40 people have died in the past four days in landslides caused by incessant rains in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, state government officials said Friday. Earlier, the Star Television, quoting state officials, had said that at least 58 people had died due to landslides in the Himalayan region. State officials said the army had been called to assist state authorities in relief operations in the Garhwal Hills, about 750 km northwest of the state capital, Lucknow. The worst-hit areas were four villages in Ukhimath region of Rudrapur district from where 15 bodies were recovered Thursday, state officials said. People in the Chamoli district also died in landslides. "More casualties are not ruled out," Naresh Dayal, principal secretary in the Uttar Pradesh government, told Reuters. He said communication breakdowns and traffic disruption on the main routes were affecting timely information from reaching the state headquarters in Lucknow.

### Singaporeans sent to gallows for Bulgarian beauty's grisly death

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Two Singaporean men were sentenced to death by a court Friday after being found guilty for the gruesome murder of a former Bulgarian beauty queen, local television reported. Iordanka Apostolova, 27, who came to Singapore in 1996, was hacked and found drowned in a canal in January. Her murder received wide publicity here. Justice Tan Ting Chiu sentenced Shaiful Edham Adam, 22, a former commodities broker, and Norishyam Mohammad Ali, 26, a former lorry driver, to death after hearing arguments from state and defence lawyers during the 10-day trial. Shaiful and Norishyam were friends of the victim, whose death was believed linked to a dispute over the sale of a car. During the trial, each had accused the other of striking the fatal blows, newspapers reported. State lawyer Francis Tseng had told the court in his opening arguments that Apostolova had suffered a slow and painful death at the hands of her murderers. She had lived for more than a day after being slashed eight times, suffocated with a cushion and having detergent shoved down her throat. She even survived for hours when left in a carton sealed tight with masking tape. In the end, she drowned after her assailants tied a bag of stones around her ankles and kicked her into a canal.

### Bomb scare on ferry in Sydney

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — Police blew up a package suspected of containing a bomb on a passenger ferry at the main passenger wharf in Sydney Friday. Authorities refused to say whether the package held explosives. The suspicious package was discovered aboard the ferry Sirius mid-morning, as it travelled from Neutral Bay on Sydney's north shore to Circular Quay, in the heart of the city, a police spokesman said. About 30 passengers aboard the ferry were evacuated and the boat was isolated at a mooring near the International Passenger Terminal in Sydney Cove. Emergency services cordoned off the immediate vicinity and the busy Circular Quay ferry terminal complex was closed to harbour traffic for more than two hours. Bomb disposal specialists detonated the package after about three hours and the wharf was reopened. The bomb scare comes as the city is preparing to host the 2000 Olympic Games, and authorities have been on the lookout for possible security threats to the harbour. Special ferries will serve as public transport from the wharf to the key Olympics site, and athletes and dignitaries will also travel this way. Inspector Garry Smith of the Bomb Squad refused to confirm whether the device that was destroyed had been bomb.

## 'CIS ready to prevent Taliban incursion'

NOVGOROD, Russia (AFP) — Russia and former Soviet states bordering Afghanistan will prevent the Taliban militia crossing their frontiers, President Boris Yeltsin said Friday.

"We have decided to prevent the Taliban crossing and I think we are able to do so," said Yeltsin, speaking during a visit to this northwestern town.

"The threat to security from the Taliban, which is approaching the southern borders of the CIS, exists but Moscow, Dushanbe and Tashkent are capable of opposing it," Yeltsin said, quoted by the ITAR-TASS news agency.

Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) — a loose-knit successor to the USSR — share a more than 2,000-kilometre border with Afghanistan, where the hard-line Islamic militia is pushing north, overrunning strongholds of the anti-Taliban alliance.

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have put border forces on maximum alert. Russia is sending troop reinforcements to the Tajik border.

Russia recognises President Burhanuddin Rabbani, ousted by the Taliban two years ago, as the authority in Afghanistan.

Russia has warned Afghanistan could become a hotbed of international terrorism and Moscow and its allies fear Islamic fundamentalist propaganda could destabilise central Asia and Muslim communities in Russia.

Russia Thursday appealed to the international community to intervene in Afghanistan, accusing the Taliban militia of an "ethnic massacre" in overrunning the city of Mazar-i-Sharif, an opposition stronghold, Saturday.

The former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 to shore up the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. It had more than 100,000 troops in the country until a phased withdrawal in 1988 and 1989.

## Congo capital without power as rebels control supply

KINSHASA (AFP) — Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), was without electricity Friday after rebels claimed control of the country's main power station.

Rebels said Thursday they had taken control of the hydroelectric dam at Inga, more than 400 kilometres southwest of the capital in this vast central African country.

The Tutsi-led rebellion against President Laurent Kabila's regime began in the eastern DRC on Aug. 2. Rebels now claim control of at least one-third of the country, including the narrow western seaboard.

Electricity supplies to Kinshasa and Brazzaville, the capital of Congo lying across the River Congo, were cut off at 1400 GMT Thursday. Both cities get

their power from the 1,750-megawatt Inga power station.

In Kinshasa Friday, the outage caused radio and television stations to remain off the air, while several businesses were closed, service stations were shut down and public transport was disrupted. Businesses with generators continued to function.

Construction began on the dam in 1968 under former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, in what was then Zaire. It began operations in 1972 but was finally completed in 1987.

The Inga River dam also provides power for the mines of the Gezime company, the largest mining group in the DRC, the southwestern Bas-Congo province and parts of the southeastern Katanga province.

## Over 32 Sierra Leone rebels killed in ECOMOG operations

FREETOWN (AFP) — The west African intervention force ECOMOG has recaptured two important diamond towns from rebels in Sierra Leone, killing 32 rebels in one and an unspecified number in the other, sources said Friday.

The ECOMOG forces, backed by civil defence forces, killed 32 rebels in the capture of the eastern town of Gandorhun Thursday, according to defence sources in the southern city of Bo, who said mopping-up operations were under way.

Gandorhun, strategically located between the Kono and Kailahun diamond centres, had served as a

springboard for rebel attacks on both. In another operation, ECOMOG chased rebels out of Yamandu, in Kono district, said the local brigade commander, Colonel Rafu Adeshina.

He said the rebels, who had held Yamandu for more than four months, suffered heavy casualties but he did not give figures.

Since toppling the military regime of Major Johnny Paul Koroma in Freetown and restoring President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to power in March, ECOMOG has continued to face resistance from junta forces in several parts of the country.



Albanians sit in a tractor during an offensive against displaced during their badly damaged

## Two U.S. to meet

WASH. (AFP) — The U.S. and Albania met in Macedonia to discuss the Kosovo crisis. The U.S. and Albania met in Macedonia to discuss the Kosovo crisis. The U.S. and Albania met in Macedonia to discuss the Kosovo crisis.

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Ethnic Albanians sit in a tractor trailer as they return to the village of Rezalla. Thousands of Ethnic Albanians, who being displaced during an offensive of the Yugoslav forces against Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) separatists, are returning to their badly damaged homes in the Drenica region (Reuters photo)

## Two U.S. representatives to meet Kosovo politicians

SKOPJE (AFP) — The U.S. embassy in Macedonia Friday denied reports that U.S. envoy Christopher Hill was back in the Kosovo capital Pristina, but confirmed that two U.S. representatives were to meet Kosovo Albanian politicians.

Hill, U.S. ambassador in Skopje, is mediating between the Kosovo Albanian representatives and Belgrade authorities.

He was involved in formation of a five-member negotiating team for talks with the federal Yugoslav government in Belgrade over the future of Kosovo, announced Thursday by Kosovo ethnic Albanian political leader Ibrahim Rugova.

The two U.S. representatives officials were to visit Pristina Friday for talks with Rugova's negotiating team, the embassy said.

Diplomatic sources said the U.S. representatives would discuss a platform for possible peace talks with the Yugoslav authorities.

Missing from Rugova's list however were representatives of the guerrillas of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) who many believe will inevitably be included in any Albanian negotiating team.

Though the KLA named a team of political representatives for the first time Thursday, it remains to be

seen if the shadowy movement will permit them to enter talks with Belgrade alongside Rugova's team.

And the international community has urged Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to resume talks with Albanians in order to find a settlement of the crisis in the war torn Kosovo province.

In Pristina, Rugova told reporters Friday that the "Serb offensive (in Kosovo) should be halted, and afterwards, a positive atmosphere for negotiations should be created".

He accused Serb authorities of "continuing shelling of many villages" in central and western Kosovo, adding that displaced in Kosovo "are threatened with humanitarian catastrophe".

Rugova confirmed his position that the best solution for the province "is its independence, with an international civil protectorate as a transitional solution".

He urged the U.S., EU and U.N. to "take all necessary measures to protect Kosovo population... and halt Serb offensive".

Kosovo Albanians who seek independence from Belgrade broke off talks at the end of May because of Serb police operations in the province which have left more than 500 dead and forced tens of thousands to flee their homes.

## Grandson of gambling kingpin wounded in botched kidnap

HONG KONG (AP) — The grandson of one of Macau's original gambling kingpins was wounded in a shootout with attackers who apparently planned to kidnap him, news reports said Friday.

Yip Wai-Tong, 46, was shot in the abdomen and seriously wounded in an attack Thursday morning on a Macau street.

He returned fire with his own handgun, shattering windows of the attackers' van and driving them off. The van was abandoned about 500 metres away, and police were looking for the attackers, Hong Kong newspapers said.

Macau has struggled with gang violence, much of it connected to the gambling industry, this year, its last full year under Portuguese rule.

After some 450 years as a Portuguese territory, it returns to Chinese rule in December 1999.

Critics say the territory, about 70 kilometres across the mouth of the Pearl River from Hong Kong, relies too much on gambling for its income.

Hong Kong newspapers said Yip lives in Hong Kong and runs soft drink and water distilling companies for his father.

They said Yip had a license to carry a gun. His grandfather, Yip Hon, was one of Macau's original gambling tycoons. He died last year at the age of 93. At his funeral, another one of Macau's gambling top gamblers, Stanley Ho, referred to Yip Hon as the "the God of gambling".

## Thousands of quakes rock central Japan's Nagano

TOKYO (AFP) — More than 2,800 minor and moderate quakes have struck a mountain region in Nagano, central Japan, in a week, officials said Friday, warning of further jolts ahead.

The latest moderate quake struck at 2:06 p.m. (0506 GMT) in central Nagano, some 200 kilometres northwest of Tokyo, measuring 4.1 on the Richter scale, the Meteorological Agency said.

The epicentre of the quake zone is close to Kamikochi, a summer resort area where tens of thousands of people are spending their traditional mid-August holidays.

Nagano city officials said there had been some cancellations of hotel reservations in the area but the number of visitors appeared to be only "just below" last year's levels.

By 5 p.m. (0800 GMT), the meteorological agency had registered a total of 2,812 minor and moderate quakes since Aug. 7 of which 79 could be felt by humans, an agency official said.

No casualties or major building damage was reported, police said. Earthquakes in Nagano would persist because seismic activity had yet to subside, the agency official said, calling for people to take precautions.

"We expect moderate quakes will continue for the time being," the official said. "We are still monitoring the region very carefully."

## N. Korea blasts arch-rival S. Korea for blocking pro-Pyongyang festival

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea Friday blasted South Korea for cracking down on a pro-unification festival, calling the Seoul government "anti-democratic".

"They (the South Korean government) have thrown off the hypocritical veil and openly unsheathed the sword against the pro-reunification, pro-democracy forces," Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

"Worse still, the South Korean authorities argue that anything 'pro-North' is enemy-benefiting," it said.

KCNA said this showed the Seoul government was the "most heinous anti-democratic regime of traitors who mobilise the executive judicial and all other political powers and repressive tools in criminal acts against fellow countrymen and independent reunification of the country."

South Korea deployed thousands of riot police around campuses here this week to stop a pro-North Korean festival by leftist students belonging to the outlawed student group Hanchongryon.

Hanchongryon has called for the staging of three-day rallies simultaneously with North Korea

from Thursday and has vowed to push ahead with a march Saturday to the village of Panmunjom in the demilitarised border zone for a joint festival with North Korean delegates.

The Seoul government has urged Hanchongryon to cancel its rallies, calling them "pro-North Korean."

The Stalinist North has snubbed proposed talks with South Korean dissidents and civic groups to prepare for the joint reunification festival in Panmunjom, the only contact point in the zone separating the two Koreas.

Instead, the North urged Hanchongryon to join the festival marking Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945.

Pyongyang said Koreans from overseas arrived in North Korea "by plane, train and ship on Aug. 12 and 13 to participate in the Grand festival for National Reconciliation, Unity and Reunification."

Two members of Hanchongryon have also illegally entered North Korea through Germany.

The two Koreas are still technically at war following the 1950-53 Korean war and any contacts or visits to North Korea must be authorised by the Seoul government.

## Gunmen injure 7 schoolchildren, youths torch vehicles in Karachi

KARACHI (AFP) — Gunmen sprayed bullets at schoolchildren celebrating Pakistan's independence day Friday and youths torched five vehicles as violence escalated in Karachi, police said.

Police also found the bullet-riddled body of a man killed overnight, raising the death toll from three days of unrest in the southern port city to 17.

Police said gunmen in a car attacked the children, wearing school uniform and colourful dresses to mark independence day. The shooting in the eastern Korangi district left seven children aged between 10 and 12 injured. A girl who was hit in the chest was in critical condition, hospital sources said.

"We were singing national songs in a tent outside the school when suddenly we heard the gunfire. Several children fell as blood was oozing out of their wounds," 10-year-old Mohammad Asif, who was hit in the leg, told reporters from his hospital bed.

The attackers fled the scene, leaving staff and students screaming.

Groups of youths torched five vehicles and stoned several cars elsewhere in the city despite a heavy deployment of paramilitary troops and police, police and residents said.

The latest violence in Pakistan's largest city followed the killing of 13 people, including 10 activists of an influential ethnic-based party, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), late Wednesday. Three more people including two political activists believed to be workers of a break-away faction the MQM-Haqiqi, were shot dead Thursday.

The main MQM represents the Urdu-speaking settler community in southern Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital. It has blamed the break-away MQM-Haqiqi faction, which split in 1992, for the killings. The MQM has announced a day of mourning Saturday to protest at the killings.

Haqiqi leaders denied their supporters were to blame for the violence and blamed it on infighting within the MQM ranks.

The mainstream MQM is a coalition partner of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government at the centre and in Sindh province.

Since 1992 hundreds of people have been killed in clashes between the rival activists.

Some 300 people were killed in June and July in the city. This year's death toll from ethnic, political and sectarian violence is around 800.

## South Korea to release 94 political convicts in amnesty

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea Friday pardoned 94 political prisoners and more than 2,000 other convicts to mark the nation's 50th anniversary but Amnesty International slammed Seoul for making their release conditional.

"The amnesty is aimed at achieving a grand national harmony to help overcome the current national crisis," said Justice Minister Park Sang-Chun, announcing the amnesty in a televised address.

Among the prisoners to be freed Saturday is one of the most prominent political detainees, dissident poet Park No-Hae, who was jailed for life seven years ago for leading an underground revolutionary group.

But 17 long-term prisoners including Woo Yong-Gak, 69, who has been behind bars for more than 40 years on charges of spying for North Korea, were excluded. They refused to sign a pledge to obey the South's laws.

Seventy-seven foreigners will also be released from jails across the country and will be expelled immediately, while two Pakistani workers convicted of murder had death sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

The prisoners will walk free on the Aug. 15 anniversary of the founding of South Korea, in one of the largest amnesties ever granted here. It benefits a total of 7,070 people.

The 94 political prisoners to be freed include 46 members of the radical Hanchongryon student group — which has been accused of being pro-North Korean — who will also be released after signing the oath.

President Kim Dae-Jung, a former dissident, had changed a previous law forcing those who wish to be amnestied to renounce Communism. He has replaced it with an oath of obedience to South Korean law.

He will, in a speech Saturday to celebrate the nation's anniversary, make further conciliatory gestures towards rival North Korea, according to a draft received here.

Kim will offer to send an envoy to North Korea to help remove the "wall of mistrust" separating them and to set up a permanent mechanism for high-level dialogue.

"If North Korea agrees, I am ready to dispatch my envoy to Pyongyang," the speech said.

Kim said the two Koreas had numerous issues to talk

about, including ways to activate joint commissions to implement their 1992 Basic Agreement on non-aggression as well as cooperation and exchanges.

But despite an easing in the official attitude to the North, human rights group Amnesty International Friday urged President Kim to make the release of political prisoners unconditional.

The watchdog also said more than 100 people had been arrested under the country's draconian national security law since Kim's government came to power in February. "Amnesty International is calling on President Kim Dae-Jung not to make their release conditional on signing an 'oath' to respect the law," the London-based human rights body said in a statement.

"The oath requires prisoners to respect the National Security Law — a law which is used frequently to jail people for exercising their freedom of expression."

It urged the government to free all other political prisoners held under the national security law and other legislation, for non-violent activities. These included students, trade unionists and activists.

"Maintaining state security does not mean locking up people for having left wing views and keeping them locked up because they refuse to accept a law which violates fundamental human rights," it said.

South Korean human rights activists said there were some 360 such prisoners across the country, including those who have yet to finish their trials.

In addition to prisoners, another 4,833 people will benefit from the clemency measure, seeing suspended jail sentences scrapped or having their civil rights restored.

Many of the 4,833 were convicted of less serious crimes such as violating election laws or drink driving.

Six politicians, who were implicated in corruption scandals involving the collapsed Hanbo Group, will also be released or have their civil rights restored. But Hanbo Group's founder Chung Tae-Soo, the former head of the Korea First Bank Lee Chul-Soo, and the son of former President Kim Young-Sam, Kim Hyun-Chul, were excluded from the measure.

Kim Hyun-Chul has been freed on bail and has brought his alleged corruption case to the upper court.

## Sri Lanka's Tiger rebels hijack merchant ship with Indian crew

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil Tiger rebels hijacked a foreign-owned cargo ship off Sri Lanka's northeastern coast Friday together with 21 crew members, including 17 Indian nationals, the military and agents for the vessel said.

Gunmen from the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) seized the 6,000-tonne M.V. Princess Kash off Mullaitivu while it was taking supplies to private traders in the Jaffna Peninsula, a military spokesman said.

Jaffna is supplied only by sea and air because the main land route is held by the Tigers.

Shipping officials said the vessel was carrying 2,500 tonnes of cement and general cargo, including vehicles and food. The rebels had taken the ship to a coastal base at Mullaitivu and were unloading the cargo, officials said.

Cement is banned from rebel-held areas of the island's north because it could be used to reinforce bunkers, officials said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said they were approached by the local company which chartered the ship, Goodwill Shipping, to secure the release of the crew members.

"Our concern is the safety of the crewmen and we are getting in touch with the concerned parties to secure their release as soon as possible," an ICRC spokesman here said.

The ICRC has intervened to secure the freedom of foreign nationals who were captured by the LTTE after attacks on merchant shipping in the past three years.

"We don't know the exact fate of the crew," a military official said, adding naval investigations were continuing but there were no signs of a rescue operation.

The local company which chartered the vessel said they were awaiting details but had been told by the navy there was a pre-dawn "terrorist attack" on the ship.

A spokesman for Goodwill Shipping said the vessel was also carrying a large number of tractors, motorcycles and three-

wheel scooters in addition to building materials.

The vessel left Colombo three days ago and passed Trincomalee at mid-night on its way to Jaffna when it was seized, military officials said. There was no immediate word from the LTTE about the military claims.

Indian diplomats said they were in contact with Sri Lankan defence authorities as well as the ICRC about the fate of the crew which include four Sri Lankans.

Last September the LTTE claimed the sinking of a Chinese ship, the MV Cordiality, after killing 15 Sri Lankan soldiers who were guarding it near Pulmoddai just south of Mullaitivu — where the rebels have a key base.

The LTTE has already cautioned that any vessel in Tamil territorial waters — foreign-owned or otherwise — engaged in activities associated with the Sri Lankan military will be considered legitimate military targets," the LTTE said after that attack.

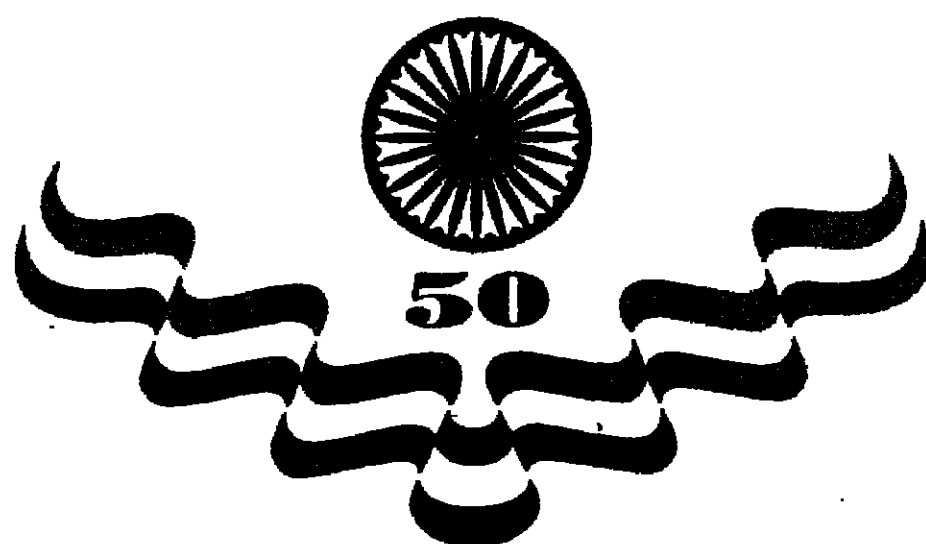
Following an attack on July 8 last year on a North Korean cargo vessel, the MV Morangbong and on a passenger ferry, the MV Misen, eight days earlier, the LTTE issued a similar warning it would target merchant vessels supplying Jaffna.

The Chinese ship was loading ilmenite, an ore of titanium, when it was attacked.

In August 1996, the LTTE attacked the Philippine-registered MV Princess Wave which was loading the same cargo for a Japanese consignee. In August 1995, the LTTE hijacked a passenger ferry the Iris Moana off Mullaitivu.

After that attack the LTTE freed the 136 Tamil civilian passengers but held back some of the crew members from the majority Sinhalese community.

The Tigers are leading a protracted campaign for independence in the island's northeast where the minority Tamil community is concentrated. More than 55,000 people have been killed in fighting since 1972.



A black and white photograph of the National Stadium in Havana, Cuba. The stadium is a large, circular structure with a prominent flag flying from the top. Several tall palm trees are visible in the foreground and around the stadium. The image is oriented horizontally on the page.

48 years

WHEN WE draw the balance sheet of India's achievements in post-independence era, the statement by them in general covers, agriculture, science and technology, industry, telecommunication, education, aviation, railways, defence, almost everything that, indeed, was uninspiring, from sleepy pre-independence colonial economy, to the greatest in the world. In fact, the DMG most abashed with the third rate technically-trained manpower.

DM prefer to classify this nation into sub-continent and the largest economy in terms of "braking Power Parity". Geographically India is the seventh largest in area, demographically it is the second largest in population.

Such a giant nation has found its rightful place in the comity of nations and be an equal player in science, technology, industry and so. Recent policy initiatives are paving the way for this so-called prior, state-driven giant integrates itself fully. High export growth and diversification of manufacturing are adequate testimony of India's emerging industrial and competitive abilities. Its economic growth and pay off in the reduction resulting from the liberalization initiatives of the liberalization nearly 60% of its \$26.6 bil-

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## India Tea

### 'Golden beverage for golden health'

TEA IS the most widely used beverage in the world today. Three distinct varieties of teas are grown in India. This 'Distinguished Triad' comprises of teas are grown in Assam in North East India, Darjeeling at the foothills of the Himalayas and the Nilgiri Blue Mountains in South India. Each of these three varieties has its own distinctive characteristics.

Darjeeling tea, grown on the slopes nesting close to the mighty Himalayas, famed for its delicate exotic flavour and aroma. Assam tea is unequalled for its strength and full bodied liquor. Nilgiri tea flourishes on the gentle slopes of the fascinating Blue Mountains of South India and is characterised by brightness and fragrance.

In different parts of the world tea is prepared differently. In the Arab World, tea is generally taken without milk but sugar is added which is known as Chai Suleimani. Sometimes mint is also added for flavour. In India, most people use milk and sugar with tea. Similarly, every part of the world has its own way and tradition of preparing tea. However, three important considerations in making an enjoyable cup of tea are — (a) type of tea used, (2) kind of water used and (3) the manner of brewing. The type of tea used, of course, depends upon one's preference. The important thing is that the larger the size of the tea leaves, the longer it takes to brew. A teaspoon of orthodox tea should be used for every cup required. The normal dictum is that 1 spoon for every cup and 1 for the pot. So if 5 cups of tea are required put 6 teaspoonful of tea in the pot. In case of CTC tea, the quantity should be reduced by about half.

The water used for preparing tea must have low iron or chemical content and must not be chlorinated. Cleanly collected rain water gives outstanding result. Best tea is made with water which has come to vigorous boil. The ideal period of infusion is between 3 to 5 minutes. The water should not be over-boiled. Prolonged boiling of water removes the dissolved air and makes it flat in taste. Tea is best brewed in tea pots made of porcelain, earthenware, silver or stainless steel. Aluminium vessel should not be used because it turns tea blue. Tea pot should be rinsed with hot water before tea is brewed.

Tea cosies to keep the pot warm should best be avoided. They help to continue the extraction process in the pot leading to qualitative deterioration just as it is not advisable to re-warm tea which has gone cold. It is always better to prepare a fresh cup. Tea is certainly not a drink to be had from thermos flask. If the infused tea is kept warm for a prolonged time there is condensation of

polyphenol. That explains the peculiar taste of tea poured from a thermos flask.

These days new variants of tea have hit the market. Instant tea or iced tea have become very popular particularly in the West. Canned tea is also being marketed as a natural soft drink. Different types of flavours are also



being added to tea. So today we have teas flavoured with lemon, strawberry, chocolate, papaya, forest-flowers etc. in the market. Another variety is herbal tea. With increasing health consciousness among the people, herbs with various medicinal property are added to tea. The growing popularity of herbal tea in recent times is phenomenal.

Tea production in India has registered increase during 1997 to 810.6 million kgs. as compared to 780 million kgs. during 1996. The 1998 production is estimated to be around 825 million kgs.

At present India exports about 25% of its production. In 1997 India exported 203 million kgs. to all the major tea-consuming countries of the world. In 1998, Indian tea exports are estimated to have gone up to around 210 million kgs. Demand for Indian tea in the international market is growing. Because of its quality and strength Indian tea is considered indispensable by the blenders of most of the leading international brands. Pure Indian tea, of course, continues to be the ultimate choice of the most discerning connoisseurs throughout the world.

## 48 years of Indian Republic (1950-98)

WHEN WE draw the balance sheet of India's achievements in the post-independence era, the achievement be they in general economy, agriculture, science and technology, industry, telecommunication, education, aviation, railways, defence, almost everything are great, indeed awe-inspiring. From a sleepy, non-descript, colonial economy, to the greatest in the world. It is now the 10th most industrialised with the third largest technically-trained manpower.

IMF prefers to classify this South Asian sub-continent as the sixth largest economy in terms of Purchasing Power Parity. Geographically India is the seventh largest in area; demographically it is the second largest in population.

Such a giant nation has found its rightful place in the comity of nations and be an equal player in science, technology, industry and trade. Recent policy initiatives are now ensuring this so-called poor, underdeveloped giant integrates globally. High export growth rates and diversification of manufactured exports are adequate testimony of India's emerging industrial and competitive abilities. Its intrinsic strength and pay off in globalisation resulting from the recent policy initiatives of liberalisation. Nearly 80% of its \$26 bil-

lion export earnings are from manufactured goods such as gems and jewellery, ready-made garments, cotton yarn and fabrics. Compare this with 1950 when primary produce such as tea and jute were major foreign exchange earners.

Such remarkable progress has been achieved not overnight but through concerted and assiduous build up of science and technology of industrial development. The first prime minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, was fully committed to building scientific temper, R&D labs, technical institutions — what he in common parlance preferred to call "modern temples" for national development.

Today India has over 2500 S&T institutions, 1200 in-house R&D units in industrial undertakings with over 300,000 persons. 1% of GNP is spent on S&T development. As a result the country is one of the few nations spearheading hi-tech and newer frontiers of science, be it space, oceanography, biotechnology, tissue culture, or nuclear science.

India entered the field of nuclear technology in early fifties. By 1997 India achieved technical competence in all aspects of reactor technology and nuclear fuel cycle ranging from atomic mineral exploration to nuclear waste management.

Space programme formally

launched in 1972 has helped the country build indigenous capabilities by the nineties in space satellites, launch vehicles and associated ground systems for providing space-based service in communications, meteorology, resource survey etc. Spatial data technology is employed for micro-level national resource planning in areas such as land potential evaluation digital terrain analysis, micro-wave remote sensing, rainfall-runoff estimation, mass movement modelling etc.

In oceanography and geophysical research India is among the global frontrunners. Two permanent stations, Maitree and Dakshin Gangotri, have been established in the Antarctica besides sending off one dozen expeditions. Concerted efforts have ensured development in science and development in industry.

Modern electronic industry is one such industry extremely sensitive to developments in science and technology. The electronic industry in India is growing at 35% and shall soon be world class. More than Rs. 40,000 million worth of consumer electronic items are produced annually. At the time of becoming republic in 1950 there was no electronic industry.

In the area of telecommunications the nation have developed a

network of 20,455 exchanges with a capacity of 12.8 million lines endeavouring to cover each and every of the 557,000 villages that make India with a telephone; compared to none half a century ago, such strides in industrialisation are not limited to electronics and telecommunications alone.

Rapid progress in industrialisation are a result of conscientious, assiduous and concerted efforts in the last 47 years. Industrialisation of India has been a matter of conscious policy since 1950, the first Industrial Policy Resolution having been passed in 1948.

From chronic shortage of cement in 1950, the nation has now emerged as the fifth largest producer after China, Japan, Russia and USA. The country now meets its total requirements and exports the surplus production.

India today is the second largest producer of natural silk in the world, similar strides have been taken in the fields of paper, newsprint, aviation, ship building, defence, fighter aircraft, warships, submarines, missiles etc.

India is now the sixth country in the world to enter space. In tea, it is the largest producer and exporter; in milk it is the second largest producer after USA. Development in science, technology and industry have had their visible socio-economic impact.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

- That in terms of the IMF prescribed purchasing power parity criteria, India is the sixth largest economy in the world?
- That India has the third largest pool of scientists and engineers in the world?
- That India has the second largest number of software engineers in the world?
- That India is among the top 10 industrialised nations of the world?
- That, with more than 700 films produced annually, in 30 languages or dialects, India is the largest producer of films in the world?

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MR. K.R. NARAYANAN  
PRESIDENT OF INDIA

AND TO THE INDIAN PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD

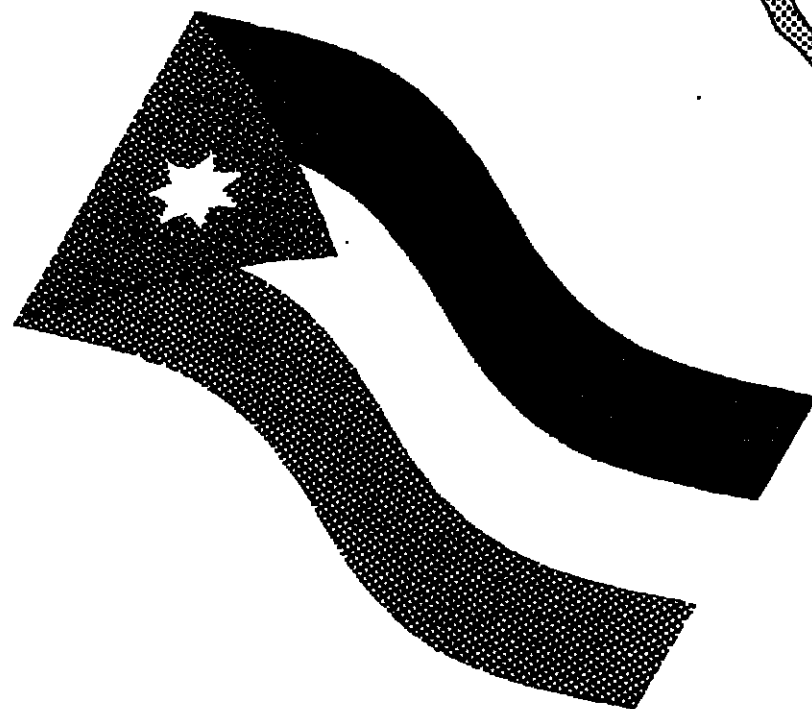
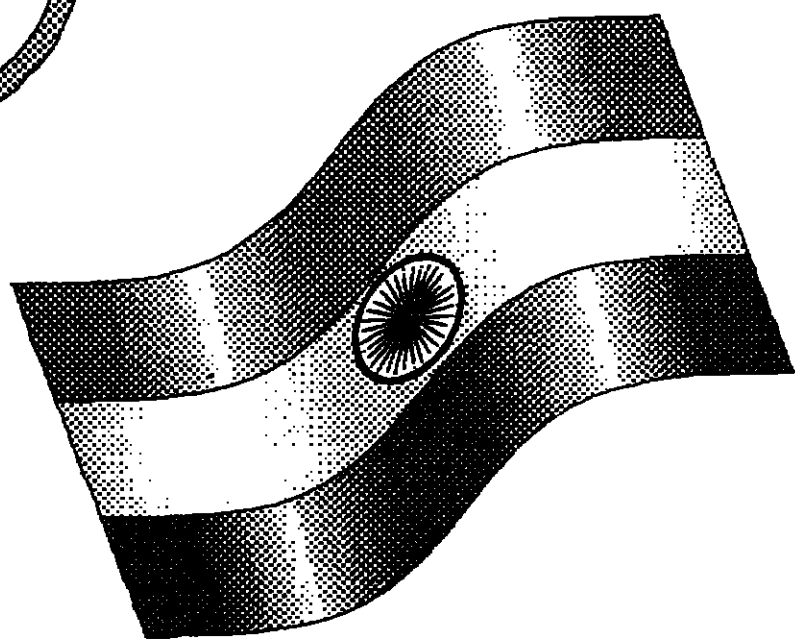


## ON THE OCCASION OF INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

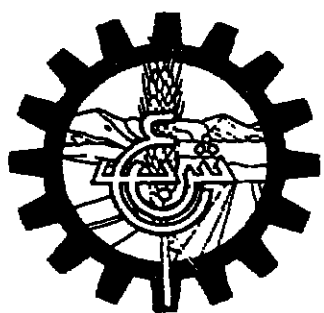
AND APPRECIATES HIGHLY THE LOYAL AND DEEP FRIENDSHIP RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE OF JORDAN

PRAYING TO GOD TO BLESS THE TWO LEADERS

HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN BEN TALAL  
AND  
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. K.R. NARAYANAN



**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 51ST ANNIVERSARY  
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AFFIRMING JORDANIAN FRIENDSHIP  
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Special An

Regarding  
did you kno

THAT WITH close to 600 million registered voters, India is the world's largest democracy?  
That 18 languages and about 800 different dialects are spoken in India? That 11 of the 18 languages are spoken by more than 25 million people each?  
That, with over 1.6 million employees, Indian Railways is the world's largest employer?  
That over 10 million passengers are carried by the Indian railway network every day?  
That, with over 11,000 branches, the State Bank of India has the most branches of any bank in the world?  
That the South Point School, with over 12,000 regular students, has the largest enrollment of all schools in the world?  
That Christianity came to



Praying prayers at the Jama

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## Regarding India, did you know...

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That, with over 11,000 branches, the State Bank of India has the most branches of any bank in the world?

That the South Point School, with over 12,000 regular students, has the largest enrollment of all schools in the world?

That Christianity came to

India before it came to Europe and that it was first introduced to India by the Apostle St. Thomas in AD 52?

That there are about 25 million Christians in India?

That Islam was first brought to southern India by Arab traders in the 7th century?

That, with over 125 million Muslims, India has the second-largest Muslim population in the world?

That Jewish contact with the Malabar coast in southern India dates back to 973 BC and that one of the oldest synagogues anywhere in the world still functions in Cochin?

That Zoroastrianism first came to India from Persia in AD 766 and that the overwhelming majority of the surviving Zoroastrians, numbering only about 130,000, live in India?

## DID YOU KNOW?

• That Aryabhatta (born 476 AD) is credited with the invention of algebra.

• That Brahmagupta was the first mathematician of the world to treat zero as a number and show its mathematical operation.

• That India is credited with the invention of trigonometry.

• That world's earliest treatise on geometry was written in the eighth century BC by Baudhayana of India.

• That the earliest use of irrational numbers and decimal system took place in India.

## ECONOMIC REFORMS IN INDIA

THE SEVENTH largest and second most populous country in the world, India has long been considered a country of unrealised potential. A new spirit of economic freedom is now stirring in the country, bringing sweeping changes in its wake. A series of ambitious economic reforms aimed at deregulating the country and stimulating foreign investment has moved India firmly into the front ranks of the rapidly growing Asia Pacific region and unleashed the latent strengths of a complex and rapidly changing nation.

India's process of economic reform is firmly rooted in a political consensus that spans her diverse political parties. India's democracy is a known and stable factor, which has taken deep roots over nearly half a century. Importantly, India has no fundamental conflict between its political and economic systems. Its political institutions have fostered an open society with strong collective and individual rights and an environment supportive of free economic enterprise.

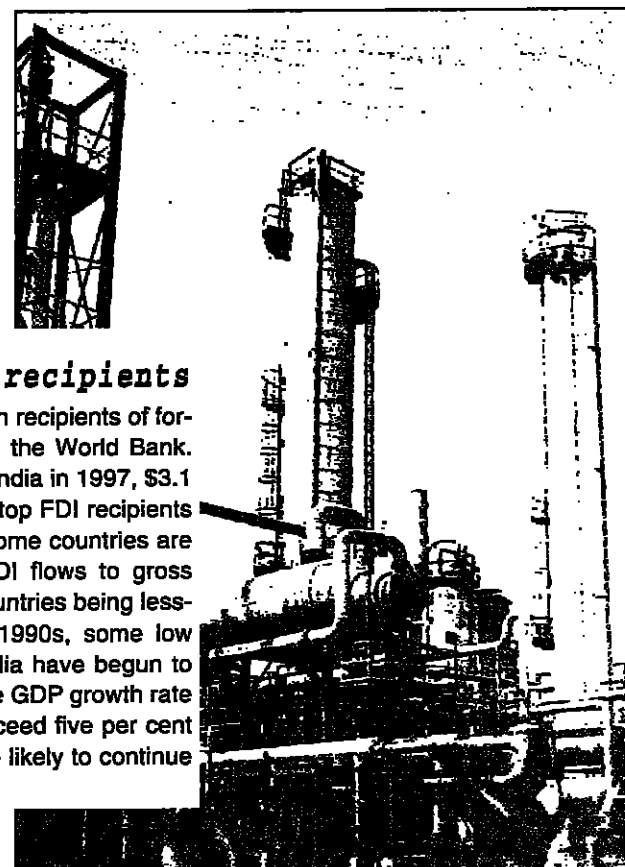
India's time tested institutions offer foreign investors a transparent environment that guarantees the security of their long-term investments. These include a free and vibrant press, a judiciary which can and does overrule the government, a sophisticated legal and accounting system and a user friendly intellectual infrastructure. India's dynamic and highly competitive private sector has long been the backbone of its economic activity. It accounts for over 75% of its gross domestic product and offers considerable scope for joint ventures and col-



India has the largest railway system in the world under a single management

laborations.

Today, India is one of the most exciting emerging markets in the world. Skilled managerial and technical manpower that match the best available in the world and a middle class whose size exceeds the population of the USA or the European Union, pro-

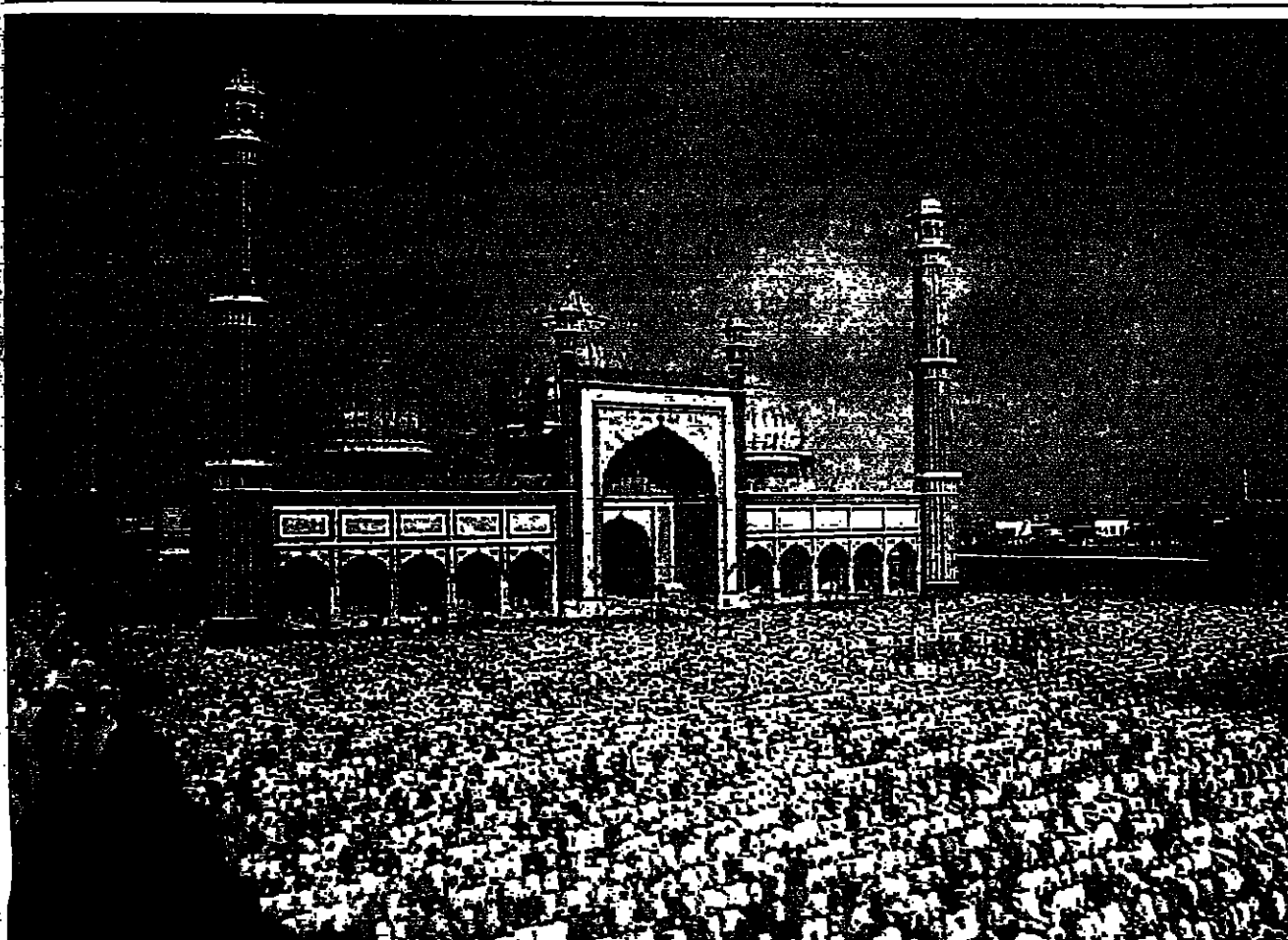


Ammonia plant in a modern petrochemical complex at Taloja in Maharashtra

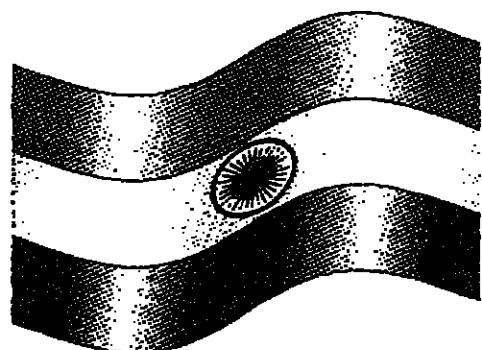
### India among top ten FDI recipients

INDIA HAS entered the ranks of the top ten recipients of foreign direct investment (FDI) according to the World Bank. Out of \$10 billion of net private flows into India in 1997, \$3.1 billion represented FDI, while most of the top FDI recipients are middle income countries, only low income countries are India and China. Despite the ratio of FDI flows to gross domestic product (GDP) of low income countries being lesser than in middle income countries in 1990s, some low income countries, besides China and India have begun to receive large amounts of FDI. The average GDP growth rate in developing countries is projected to exceed five per cent over the next 10 years, indicating they are likely to continue to attract substantial share of FDI.

vide India with a distinct cutting edge in global competition.



Offering prayers at the Jama Masjid in Delhi during Eid



ON THE OCCASION OF THE INDEPENDENCE DAY OF INDIA

The Management and Staff of



INDO-JORDAN CHEMICALS COMPANY LTD.  
(A Joint Venture between SPIC-India, JPMC-Jordan and TAIC-Saudi Arabia)

extend their warmest greetings to the people of India.

## The Magic of Bharatanatyam

USING THE body as a medium of communication, the expression of dance is perhaps the most intricate and developed, yet easily understood art form. The fascination for Indian dance all over the world is indicative of the deep-felt need to use the human body to express and celebrate the great universal truths. Indian dance does just that in a heightened, reverential form. Also, since dance is physical and visual, it illuminates India's culture in a direct manner, playing on the sensibilities of the onlooker.

Thus, those who are attracted to India will find the idiom of dance the best introduction to India's rich ethos and traditions.

One of the most enduring symbols of India is the figure of Shiva Nataraj or the dancing Shiva. Shiva's cosmic dance is believed to encompass creation, preservation, and destruction and this idea has been embedded in Hindu thought and ritual since the dawn of civilisation.

In India, dance and music pervade all aspects of life and bring colour, joy and gaiety to a number of festivals and ceremonies. In fact, dance and music are tied inextricably to festivity of any kind.

India offers a number of classical dance forms, each of which can be traced to different parts of the country. Each form represents the culture and ethos of a particular region or a group of people. The most popular classical styles seen on the Indian stage are Bharatanatyam of Tamil Nadu, Kathakali and Mohiniyattam of Kerala, Odissi of Orissa, Kathak of Uttar Pradesh, Kuchipudi of Andhra Pradesh and Manipuri of Manipur. Besides these, there are several semi-classical dances that contribute to the plethora of Indian dances.

Bharatanatyam, the most celebrated art form of the Southern Indian State of Tamil Nadu, is a dynamic and earthy dance style. It is in effect

a tradition that demands of the performer — total dedication, detachment from worldly ties and a sublimation of self to the art.

Bharatanatyam dancers are usually women and, like the ancient sculptures they take their positions from, they always dance bent-kneed. It is an extremely precise dance style where a huge repertoire of hand movements are used to convey moods and expressions.

Bharatanatyam is vibrant and very demanding of the dancer. The body



Bharatanatyam, the famous classical dance of Tamil Nadu

is visualised as made of triangles, one above and one below the torso. It is based upon a balanced distribution of body weight and firm positions of the lower limbs, allowing the hands to cut into a line, to flow around the body, or to take positions that enhance the basic form. A special feature of this dance form are 'Padams' or poems on the heroine-theme. The tempo of these love songs is slow and each phase of the performance is crystallised into a specific mood of love.

## WOMEN AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF INDIA

THOUGH INDIAN civilisation has come under many influences, it has a unique uninterrupted character. Women have played a major part in ensuring this cultural continuity through their role as preservers and disseminators of India's rich cultural heritage, traditions and values.

Indian culture is characterised not only by its continuity but also by its rich diversity. Diversity of religion, languages, customs and traditions have contributed towards its deep-rooted unity. Here again, it is women who have been major agents in keeping alive the distinct traditions of dress, cuisine, worship and social ritual of their region and locality.

Women have played multiple roles both at home and in the outside world. Women have been responsible for a long tradition of stable family life and family structure in India, despite great social, economic and political changes over the centuries.

Women participated actively in the struggle for freedom and came out in large numbers in support of Gandhiji's movement of passive resistance. The words of Sarojini Naidu and the acts of daring of Aruna Asaf Ali thrilled and inspired Indians throughout the country.

Since independence in 1947 the progress of Indian women in urban areas has been remarkable. Women pioneers entered the legal fields as far back as the late 19th century and today there are numerous women lawyers, barristers and judges. In Government service as well as in the private sector the ratio of women to men has constantly improved. There are now women judges of the Supreme Court, women entrepreneurs, women pilots who fly Air Force planes, and even women who have climbed Mount Everest. Women can be justifiably proud that they have achieved these positions in straight competition with men.

Listing the work of women in the voluntary field is not an easy task. In fields ranging from child welfare, education, women's welfare, care of the destitute and handicapped, women have made a major contribution. Social education work is of key importance in this field. It has contributed to the social upliftment of women thereby bringing about an

improvement in the equality of family life. Women voluntary social welfare workers have been responsible at all levels for planning and executing this work.

Since independence, women enjoy full political and economic rights and equality before the law. The Constitution guarantees that there will be no discrimination on grounds of gender. This has provided the framework for women to play a more active part in national life.

However, serious problems still remain. While there is no limit to the achievements of those women who can transcend social stereotypes to avail of the opportunities provided by Indian democracy, there is still a very large body of women in the rural areas which is unable to avail of these opportunities because of the persistence of social prejudice that a woman's role must be confined to one sanctioned by tradition. Female illiteracy remains high, particularly in some of the more socially backward states. Preference for male children remains strong. It is these problems which the Government is making a determined effort to overcome in the realisation that the country cannot progress unless its women take part fully in every field of national endeavour.

A unique experiment has begun with



### DID YOU KNOW?

That Aryabhata, India's first satellite, was launched in April 1975.

That India's first Satellite Launch Vehicle put Rohini Satellite into orbit in July 1980.

That Indian National Satellite (INSAT-1A), the world's first weather-cum-communication satellite was sent into space in April 1982.

That Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-D3) is India's largest and most powerful satellite launcher which put the Indian Remote Sensing Satellite (IRS-P3) into orbit in March 1996.

That India's first Remote Sensing Satellite (IRS-IC) has a resolution of 10 metres which enables it to view terrestrial installations with a highest visual range from a height of 817 kilometres in space.

## INDIA A GLOBAL SOFTWARE MAJOR

INDIA CONTINUES to create waves in the multibillion dollar global software industry with a steady and impressive increase in the volume of software exports. The year 1997 generated for India a revenue of Rs. 58,600 million through software export, as against Rs. 35,800 million in 1996, showing a record annual growth of over 64%. Yet another feather in the cap of the Indian software enterprises is the fact that more than 140 Fortune 500 companies outsourced their software requirements from India in 1997.

According to Dewang Mehta, Executive Director of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) the handsome growth in India's software export is mainly due to continuous increase in off-shore services, year 2000 date conversion opportunities and new initiatives taken by "NASSCOM". Mr. Mehta is confident that during 1998, India software export revenue may cross the target of Rs. 64,000 million. Thus marking unprecedented growth in this sector. Going further, he revealed that India has achieved a rare distinction of achieving a growth rate of 50% to 60% in its exports for seven years in a row.

A NASSCOM survey is of the view that by the year 2000 India software exports may touch the magic figure of US\$4 billion. Today, India is supplying high quality software to nearly 100 countries around the globe.

Indeed, from being a low profile and slow moving sector, the Indian software venture has blossomed into a high quality, high profile enterprise with a lucrative prospect of netting an ever-increasing volume of foreign exchange for the country. Dr. Gobind Swarup, Professor Emeritus at the Pune-based National Centre for Radio Astrophysics has urged the Indian government to declare the first decade of the next century (2001-2010), the decade of information technology, so as to trigger software exports to the tune of US\$25 billion a year.

India's Export Promotion Board (EPB) has identified software as a

ware industry may bag US\$700 million worth of order related to solving this tangle. Indian software companies are already seized of the problem and are working out a solution.

Of late, India has become a favourite destination of computer majors and multinationals for the location of their software centres. Today more than 130 Fortune 500 companies boast of their software centres in India. Indeed a study by the California based Frost and Sullivan Company says that while the labour is comparatively cheap in India, the government is also very supportive of such projects that have vast potential for foreign exchange earnings.

The world at large has in the meanwhile taken note of the fact that Indian software export is no longer dependent on body shopping — an euphemism for deputing manpower to work at the overseas sites of the clients. For, today Indian software companies are at the cutting edge of the latest generation of programmes, including multimedia and client server application.

The International Technology Park (ITP), a joint venture of the Tata Group of Industries, Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) and Singapore based consortium, recently commissioned in Bangalore, is expected to give a big boost to software export from Bangalore which accounts for more than half of the total software exports from India. Many multinational corporations and global software majors have already set their shops in ITP.

Of late, the historical city of Hyderabad has also been making it big on India's software front. As observers say, Hyderabad is all set to challenge the supremacy of Bangalore as India's Silicon Valley, thus triggering a healthy competition. The Hi-Tec city (Hyderabad Information Technology and Engineering Consultancy) being set up on the outskirts of the city is all set to attract many big players in the information industry. The Rs. 15,000 million Hi-Tec city spread over an area of 158 acres will be completed in a phased manner.

### INDIAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION (ICA) AMMAN - JORDAN

On the occasion of India's Independence Day & the conclusion of the yearlong celebrations of the 50th anniversary of India's Independence, the Indian community in Amman wish the best for India & its people.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 51ST ANNIVERSARY OF INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE  
**JORDAN COMMODITY TRADING & AGENCIES CO. LTD.**

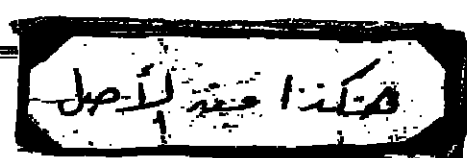
DELIGHTFULLY PARTICIPATE IN WISHING ALL INDIAN PEOPLE IN INDIA AND ABROAD AND ALL THE STAFF AT THE INDIAN EMBASSY IN AMMAN EXTENDED PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT



### GREETINGS

ON

INDEPENDENCE DAY OF INDIA  
MAY FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN  
PEOPLES OF INDIA AND JORDAN  
CONTINUE TO PROSPER  
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## Step toward removing barriers

ISRAEL HAS finally responded to Jordanian investors' demands and agreed to temporarily reduce its inputs in products manufactured at Irbid's Qualifying Industrial Zone (QIZ) to eight per cent down from 11.7 per cent.

This decision was made after a meeting held Wednesday between the Jordanian and Israeli Ministers of Trade and Industry, and Trade Minister Hani Hananiah and his Israeli counterpart Natan Sharansky.

But this move — likely to prompt many investors to apply for product qualification for a duty-free status in U.S. markets — will not materialise unless both countries receive the green light from the U.S. — the main sponsor of the QIZ deal. While awaiting U.S. approval, foreign and local investors, not having to worry much about high Israeli input prices, are expected to take advantage of the move.

The Israeli decision is viewed by Jordanian investors as a sign of goodwill. But the investors would like to see this arrangement turned into a permanent one. By acquiescing to that, Israel would ensure higher returns from the multinational investments already based at the park and from other investors who would most likely inject foreign capital in the zone.

Meanwhile, the potential to increase trade with the Palestinian territories is not expected to instantly increase trade levels between Jordan and the PNA. But it is a step in the right direction. The Palestinian market is a very important outlet for Jordanian products.

The decision should be a first step towards easing all measures that impede a smooth flow of goods between Jordan and the PNA. At \$2.7 billion-\$4 billion, the Palestinian market is the second largest for Israeli goods.

Barriers hindering the export of Jordanian cement and construction steel to the PNA, the absence of the necessary services on the borders, the high customs duties imposed on Jordanian exports, among many other factors which all make trade with the Palestinians an unbearable headache, should all be removed.

These two agreements with Israel will not certainly end the agony of the Palestinian people nor will they end economic recession in Jordan any sooner. But they will certainly contribute to confidence-building measures that are urgently needed at this stage of the peace process.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fakhri Qa'war commented on the government's decision to import bottled mineral water to meet the soaring demand for clean drinkable water. Qa'war quoted a factory owner as saying private-run factories can provide the local market with the needed water. He said the increased demand hit the water companies by surprise and they were forced to double their working hours and hire more people. The writer said the government's decision to import water was a surprise for everybody. He said the government can involve the private sector in the import of mineral water. The Ministry of Supply should give the private sector the chance to compete to provide the market with the best materials at the best prices, he said. Qa'war said the government should give up its monopoly and support its privatisation policy by allowing the private sector to share some of its responsibility.

Al-Dustour's Jihad Momani said of the bombing of the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya that it was a foregone conclusion that the blame would be placed upon Iraq and Sudan. He said imposition of sanctions or even direct military interference in these two countries is a very plausible scenario. According to Momani, it would not be difficult for the U.S. to find people in America who supported and bankrolled Sudanese opposition who would corroborate the terrorism charge against that country. He said making the imposition of sanctions a much easier process. Momani said Israel could be responsible for the bombings. According to the writer, creating instability in the area and fanning anti-Arab and anti-Muslim feelings would be in Israel's best interest and the present situation promises to do just that.

## Jordanian Perspective

Dr. Musa Keilani

## Arab harping on differences will help no one

QUITE OFTEN we hear Arab leaders condemning Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territories and emphasising the need for collective Arab action. It has become the tradition in most Arab capitals these days to lament the suffering of the Iraqi people and reiterate that the Arab World is indeed deeply concerned over the means to ensure that, Iraqis do not starve to death.

Several Arab countries, particularly Egypt in the Maghreb and the UAE in the Mashreq as well as Jordan, have taken a lead in sending occasional humanitarian supplies to Iraq despite their political differences with the regime of Saddam Hussein.

But we still have to see concrete action in terms of actual movement towards discussing those political differences and possibly adopt a unified stand to fight for an end to the eight-year-old sanctions that are directly behind the death of innocent children, women and the elderly because of the lack of food and medicine in Iraq.

It is abundantly clear that Iraq on its own would never be able to get rid of the sanctions because it does not suit the U.N. to have Iraq rejoin the regional and international order with the present regime in power in Baghdad. If anything,

the sanctions are a hefty weapon used to serve certain strategic interests in the region.

What we have seen is a determined drive to keep the Saddam regime as a caged lion. Of course Washington is on the lookout for the right person from among Iraqis to replace Saddam and contain the bloodbath that is inevitable in Baghdad if its rulers are forced out. The U.S. wants a situation where it would be able to call the shots in such a transition and it is unlikely that Washington might help any plot to eliminate Saddam until it is assured that whoever succeeds him would play to U.N. resolutions.

As such, what we are seeing today in our region is a campaign to determine the fate of a fellow Arab country.

While it is debatable whether accomplishing the U.S. plan will end the suffering of the Iraqi people, there is no doubt that Arab interests would not be served.

That should be the launching pad for any collective action to resolve the protracted Iraq crisis, which threatens to finger into the future with no light at the end of the tunnel.

By the same token, those who lament the setbacks that the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians, received in the

"good faith" peace negotiations launched with Israel in 1991 should also realise and accept that it is the state of disunity and incoherence in the Arab World that is behind the arrogance of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Netanyahu is effectively telling the Arab World, and indeed the international community, that Israel is interested in peace with the Arabs only on its own terms and nothing else is acceptable. And the Arab World is hapless to counter that challenge.

The net picture that emerges from the current situation in the Arab World is that Arab inaction has led to the undermining of higher Arab interests in the internal as well as external contexts. The more such inaction continues, the worse the situation turns.

And when efforts are launched to bring about a brainstorming session of the highest levels of Arab leadership, petty differences crop up to spoil the attempt.

If the Arabs are to hope for any upturn in the situation facing them today, they have to get their act together, transcending differences with each other. As long as they design their planning on the basis of their differences, there is little hope for Palestine. Much less so for Iraq.

## Iraq mounts challenge against last 2 in pro-sanctions camp

By G.H. Jansen

"ENOUGH IS ENOUGH." It is under that rubric of Arab impatience with the sufferings caused by U.S.-dictated sanctions policy that Iraq has now refused to accept any more U.N. inspection teams searching for material or information about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. At present, Iraq is allowing U.N. teams to monitor only sites already inspected.

Iraq has been compelled to mount this challenge by the cruel consequences of the eight-year sanctions regime for 22 million Iraqis.

The Iraqi ministry of health, which last week said 1.4 million Iraqis have died because of the sanctions, also reported that at least 50,000 children died in 1997 because of "malnutrition" and UNICEF says that 58 per cent of all Iraqi children are "malnourished." Infant mortality has quadrupled since 1990. These statistics are damning but to drive them home the authorities should have employed harsh, emotive words such as "starvation" and "hunger," applied to the state of affairs in Somalia or southern Sudan, to force world public opinion to understand and acknowledge that the situation in Iraq has been caused by the embargo imposed by the U.N. rather than the 1991 war and short-lived civil unrest. It is the world community, through the Security Council, which is killing Iraqis of all ages, but most especially the very young and very old, and physically and mentally stunting a whole generation of deprived children.

The oil-for-food programme which graciously permitted Iraq to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months in order to purchase food and medical supplies has failed to meet the needs of

the Iraqi people. This is partly because half that sum was deducted for war reparations, U.N. expenses, repairing the pipeline linking Iraq's oilfields to Turkey and aid to the Kurds. Thus, the Iraqi people were left with just \$1 billion to buy both food and medical supplies during each six-month period. And to make matters worse, the U.S. and Britain, dominating the Security Council committee overseeing contracts for supplies, routinely delayed purchases and shipments.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that the amount of oil Iraq can export has fallen from \$2 to \$5.3 billion, making available \$4.3 billion for humanitarian supplies, cannot meet Iraqi needs. First, because adequate supplies of food and medicines cannot solve Iraq's humanitarian emergency. And, because at present the country cannot export oil to the value fixed by Amman since its production capacity has fallen to less than half of its pre-Gulf war level due to degradation and lack of spare parts.

Even if Iraq is able to raise its production to the desired level, the problems its people face cannot be met under the oil-for-food programme, but only when sanctions are lifted. This is because the Iraqi socio-economic infrastructure has collapsed.

Iraqis have to drink polluted water. Sewage treatment plants have stopped working because of a lack of chemicals and spare parts, binned under the sanctions regime. Raw effluent is simply dumped into Iraq's rivers. Pumps providing the capital, towns and villages with potable water are also not working, partly because of no spare parts and partly because there is no electricity to drive the pumps. Power outages have fall-

en from 60 per cent in the past eight years. Thus, electricity is cut by six to eight hours a day in Baghdad and 20 hours daily in the countryside. This means that irrigation pumps cannot work. Thus there has been a fall in agricultural production and a reduction in livestock. Soaring summer temperatures are taking an even higher toll than during the rest of the year.

Sanctions do more than kill and maim. Sanctions have crippled the entire generation of children growing up since 1990 by depriving them of education. Iraqis call this generation the "lost generation." Because of sanctions, Iraq is unable to repair 4,157 schools damaged during the Gulf war or to rebuild 150 schools destroyed at that time. Classrooms built for 35 children now hold 70 and operate in two daily shifts. Many children must find work to help their families survive so school enrolment has fallen by 50 per cent. Under the new oil-for-food plan, Iraq has budgeted \$100 million for education compared with \$4.5 billion spent before the embargo.

Last June, Baghdad believed it had come to a modus operandi with the head of the U.N. Special Commission for disarming Iraq (UNSCOM), the Australian Richard Butler, who presented a "plan of work" and promised that if it was followed he could recommend a lifting of sanctions as early as this October. But since then UNSCOM has alleged that Iraq continues to follow a "pattern of concealment" and could not expect an early end to sanctions. The Atomic Energy Agency said Iraq has completed the destruction of all its nuclear weaponry but the Agency has refused to give the country a clean bill of health because it cannot be certain of

what Iraq might do in the future. So the "nuclear file," which Iraq expected to be closed this summer, remains open. Although UNSCOM has accounted for all of Iraq's missiles, this file has not been closed. And, UNSCOM continues to investigate Iraq's chemical and biological weapons — which most international experts believe can never be fully documented and eliminated.

Iraq now sees sanctions as a long-term U.S. plan to starve and permanently weaken its population which is being rendered illiterate by the lack of education. The aim is to take this oil-rich country back to a pre-industrial age. This is why Iraq has taken the drastic step of shutting down UNSCOM's inspection operations. For as long as they search, the files will remain open.

Baghdad decided to mount its challenge now because the U.S. and U.K. stand alone in their support of sanctions. The fact that Washington has made it clear that it will oppose the lifting of sanctions as long as President Saddam Hussein remains in power has alienated many governments prepared to tolerate sanctions. Furthermore, Russia, China, France and the Arab countries — even Kuwait — oppose U.S. military action against Iraq if it persists with this stand against inspections. By maintaining the punitive sanctions regime for so long, the U.S. and U.K., the victors of the 1991 war, have transformed Iraq into a victim. It is no longer seen as an aggressor but as a country struggling for the very existence of its people.

The writer is a Nicosia-based free-lance journalist specialising in Middle East issues. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

## Innocents lose their shirts at the currency casino

By Glyn Roberts

LONDON — The shockwaves from last year's east Asian financial crisis are still being felt around the world — and the currency speculators who helped to trigger it are still cashing in.

The latest target has been the South African rand, which now appears to have stabilised after losing almost a quarter of its value since May.

Who will be the next to take a tumble in the currency casino? Some financial analysts expect further depreciation in east Asia over the next few months, and, possibly, in "transition economies" in eastern Europe.

International speculation is a bit like a poker game in which the gambler with the deepest pockets is virtually certain to win. The losers include a nation's central bank, which spends heavily trying to prop up the value of its currency. But those who take a real hammering are the businesses that collapse, the workers whose jobs disappear and the families whose homes are repossessed in the economic turmoil that generally ensues.

The winners are rich speculators who scour the world in search of the right conditions in which they can make a killing. They are not really interested in poor nations — what they really like to see is a juicy economy showing signs of trouble.

This they found in 1997 in places such as Thailand and certain other east Asian countries which had run up large foreign debts and balance-of-payment deficits in their dash for development. To fuel rapid growth they had removed controls over the flow on funds in and out of their countries.

But much of the money pouring in did not go into productive sectors such as export manufacturing, but into areas such as shares, new ventures which lacked experience and into property, which became dangerously over-valued.

When investors sensed this danger, they took flight. Confidence can be a fickle fellow, with market players tending to follow the herd, and, amid signs of a potential stampede, the currency speculators moved in.

At the international gaming table, the speculators' chips are held in a "hedge fund." The best-known speculator, George Soros, runs a huge hedge fund called Quantum. Such funds are basically clubs for billionaires to invest in. Because of their financial strength, they have powerful financial leverage — and can borrow many times their own value. They borrow vast amounts of a local currency — the Thai baht, for example — which they then sell to buy U.S. dollars. This increases downward pressure on the baht.

The country's central bank tries to

protect the currency by selling lots of its dollar reserves to buy — in this case — baht. (The Thai central bank sold \$28 billion to try to protect its value). But if the speculators' pockets are deep enough, the central bank runs out of foreign exchange with which to defend the currency, and its value falls.

The hedge fund then repays its borrowing in devalued baht, and the players cash in their chips for a healthy profit.

After Thailand, the speculators turned their attentions to other "Asian Tigers," which had similar economic problems and which were being drawn into the crisis of confidence. Other currencies affected included the Malaysian ringgit, South Korea won, Indonesian rupiah and Philippine peso. Taiwan and Singapore were also affected but not as badly, as they had larger foreign reserves and smaller debt. Hong Kong used to keep pockets to defend its dollar, since daily, although the stock market crashed in the panic.

The hedge funds from east Asia sourced confidence in "emerging" markets across the world, and South Africa was chosen as a target this year precisely because it had only relatively low levels of foreign-exchange reserves available with which to defend the rand.

Predatory hedge funds, evaporating confidence and the herd mentality of

investors pose real threats to stable growth and widespread prosperity — particularly in view of the global financial system in which vast amounts of money flow electronically in the blink of an eye. An estimated \$1,200 billion washes through the world economy every day.

To curb these worrying trends, various measures have been suggested, including more regulation and supervision of the financial sector, less hasty liberalisation, controls on the amounts that hedge funds can borrow, and the introduction of tariffs on international financial deals. Chile has already introduced a tax on short-term investments, and much has been spoken of a worldwide "Tobin Tax" — named after American Nobel laureate James Tobin — to be levied on currency transactions and to discourage speculation.

Powerful industrialised countries remain cool to such a tax, and opponents dismiss it as unworkable. But supporters point out that advances in computer technology have made it possible to monitor large financial dealings.

Soros, the king of the speculators, has himself suggested the establishment of an international credit insurance corporation to guarantee a country's financial loans. Certainly, governments should no longer guarantee the loans of private companies, as happened in Asia.

Here, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stands accused of double standards. Critics say the fund, which negotiated bail-out packages, turned a blind eye to the manoeuvrings of Western creditors as they demanded government guarantees to recover all their losses in east Asia.

"If the Korean government sought to subsidise loss-making private enterprises, the IMF would be the first to accuse Seoul of interfering with market forces," said Martin Khor Kok Peng, director of Third World Network, a Malaysia-based institute specialising in economic and environmental issues.

IMF tactics have also been criticised by the celebrated North American economist John Kenneth Galbraith, who has referred to the IMF as bailing out "those most responsible," while extending "the greatest hardship to the workers, who are innocent participants."

For the moment, the east Asian casualties appear dependent on the fortunes of their currencies. These are currently bouncing around in the depths in a climate of volatility. If there is a sound financial recovery, economic health can return fairly quickly, but without this and without new thinking on international finance, there seems little hope.

— Gemini News

## Water crisis, Jordanian-Iranian relations take spotlight

Reviewed by Mohammad Ben Hussein

Local columnists last week discussed the water pollution crisis, Jordanian-Iranian relations and the recent challenged posed by Iraq against the United Nations.

Al Ra'i's Zeid Hamza criticised the Lower House Agriculture Committee accusing its members of lying about the potability of water from the Zai Water Treatment Plant. He said the committee members made an inspection visit to the plant and claimed water there was suitable for human consumption which later, he charged, was proved to be a big bluff. Hamza described the committee members as collaborators with the government and said they are not serving the purpose for which they were elected. Hamza called on Jordanian voters not to be influenced by their emotions when casting their ballots for deputies. He said since deputies control

Jordanian's futures, people have to be highly selective in choosing their four-year representative. The writer called for additional resignations of senior government officials and for negligence by public officials to be punished. Hamza criticised the government for not respecting people's intelligence by issuing contradictory statements about the causes of the water pollution.

Al Ra'i's Fakhri Kassar called for Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi to resign, charging that he is one of those responsible for the current water crisis in the country. Kassar said Kurdi should be brave enough and resign, like Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin did when recognised his guilt and resigned after pumping polluted water to residents of Amman. The writer lashed at Kurdi for what he said were contradictory statements made by the minister. Kurdi had said the water people receive from

the Zai Water Treatment Plant was drinkable, but "as a precaution," people should boil the water for several minutes," said Kassar. According to the writer, if the water is healthy then there is no need to boil it. He said Kurdi is causing public confusion.

Al Dustour's Oreib Rintawi

### Week in print

addressed the issue of Jordanian-Iranian relations after a recent visit by Minister of Foreign Affairs Jawad Anani to Tehran. The writer said he opposed the notion that fostering bilateral ties between the two countries would have a negative impact on Jordanian-Iraqi ties. He said Iran and Syria are strategic partners since the Iraq-Iran War, despite that, Iraq and Syria managed to iron out their differences. The writer predicted Iraqi-

Syrian economic cooperation would be more active than Jordanian-Iraqi cooperation. The writer said cultivating Jordanian-Iranian economic ties would bring benefit to Jordan because the Kingdom has attractive religious sites specially for Shiite Muslims. Why would Jordan not improve its ties with Iran, currently heading the Islamic Organisation, while the West, the United States and Europe are doing so? the writer asked. He did not deny the existence of some differences in both countries' views about some issues, but added it is essential to pave the way for better links.

Al Dustour's Yasser Zaara called on the Arab World to break the sanctions imposed on Iraq and not wait for the United States and Israel to decide on the future of one of their brothers. He said the Jordanian government should take the Syrian initiative of breaking the sanctions as an example and do the

same. The writer said the American promises of grants to Jordan will not be as profitable as the results of economic cooperation between Jordan and Iraq. Zaara praised Egypt's position in supporting Iraq in its stand with the United Nations and called on the Arab countries to condemn the American administration and Israel for being responsible for the current crisis between Iraq and the U.N.

Al Ra'i's Raja El Issa discussed the crisis between Iraq and the United Nations. He slammed Richard Butler, The United Nations Special Commissioner (UNSCOM) for disarming Iraq, and for being a collaborator with the United States. He said Butler is creating excuses to make the sanctions last longer. The writer said everything Butler reported to the United Nations Security Council is old news. He said if Iraq produced VX gas as Butler has claimed, this was long ago.







## The Philippines at 100

# The IMF experiments on the island nation

Editor's note: This is the first of a two-part article

By Herman Tiu Laurel

THE PHILIPPINES is many things to many people. To some it is just a motley collection of islands somewhere in the Pacific, famous for its place in World War II history. Some will still remember it as home once to two American military bases, Clark and Subic. Many will associate it with the rise and fall of the Marcos dynasty, or with the volcanic eruption of the century, Mt. Pinatubo, which lowered global temperature by 1° due to the pyroclastic material it spread over the atmosphere. In geopolitical terms, it sits at the central point of a major trade route in Asia, situated between the Pacific and the South China Sea. For this reason the Philippines became a major battle area in World War II as the key stepping stone to all points of the region. With the U.N. Law of the Sea ratified in 1983 extending exclusive economic rights 200 miles from the shores of a country, the Philippine archipelago and its sea territory rival the size of the major countries of the world.

### The first experiment in globalisation

The Philippines is a country of 72 million people, rich in gold and other mineral resources, oil and natural gas in offshore deposits, and geothermal energy supplies. Over 92 per cent of its children obtain primary education. Yet, despite all these resources and being hailed in the 1950s as one of the two emerging tiger economies (the other being Japan), it remains one of the poorest countries in the region. As one eminent nationalist-economist, Alexandro Lichauco, put it in an article published July 21, 1998, "This country has been under International Monetary Fund-World Bank supervision for 36 continuous years, and yet it can't even produce a globally competitive bubble gum. What we have created is, after 36 years of adherence to IMF-WB medication, is a bubble economy that has exploded in our faces."

Few people know that the Philippines was the first experiment in the latter day International Monetary Fund-World Bank programme of "globalisation." In 1992, following the U.S.-CIA-sponsored election victory of seventh President of the Republic of the Philippines, Diosdado Macapagal, the free trade regime was first imposed on a country in this region in exchange for a \$150 million loan and an IMF "stabilisation" programme. That loan has multiplied to \$52 billion upon the assumption of the 13th President of the Republic Joseph Estrada.

It's not for lack of independent spirit that the Philippines succumbed to such a long subjugation to foreign economic prescriptions. In 1898, the Philippines was the first Asian nation to establish a republic and declare its independence after fighting a continuous rebellion of more than 350 years against its first coloniser, Spain. This nascent independence was interrupted by over 30 years of American colonisation after Spain ceded the territory to the U.S. on Dec. 10, 1898, only six months after the Filipinos declared independence from Madrid. The ratification of the treaty taking the islands from Spain got only one vote more than the required two-thirds majority, reflecting the deep anti-imperialist and anti-"Manifest Destiny" sentiment of the American people.

Independence was re-acquired through "peaceful grant" from the American government in July 1946. The grant of independence was not altruistic, as the war-ravaged Philippines would have been an economic and financial burden to the U.S. government. On the eve of this grant of independence, the U.S. enacted two laws, one of which was the Philippine Rehabilitation Act, stipulating the much-needed war damage and compensation and financial assistance for the Philippines' sacrifice in World War II. The assistance was conditioned on the Philippine acceptance of another law, the Philippine Trade Act, otherwise known as the Bell Trade Act. The latter imposed free trade on the Philippines.

The independent spirit of the Filipinos persisted, alternately revived in the nationalist policies of two Philippine Presidents, Elpidio Quirino and Carlos Garcia, who kept buoying nationalist economic hopes of the Philippines, in the tradition of American nationalist economist Alexander Hamilton. In the 1950s, the Philippines was considered one of the two emerging tigers of the region, as the Philippines established itself as a manufacturing economy. The major component of this economy was the foreign-exchange controls system championed by the two nationalist Philippine presidents and carried to its glory in Garcia's Filipino First policy.

In 1962, in a CIA-sponsored election victory, Diosdado Macapagal won over Garcia, and immediately dismantled the foreign-exchange controls under what was known as the "decontrol" programme, surrendering all economic sovereignty over its currency and trade. Macapagal devalued the

Philippine peso from P2 to \$1 to double that, or P4 to \$1, and borrowed \$300 million in one of the earliest IMF-style "stabilisation" loans. The Philippines never looked back to the glory days of its manufacturing economy, and saw its foreign debt explode by nuclear proportions, from \$300 million in 1962 to \$52 billion today in 1998.

### The debt trap and Asian financial crisis

The foreign debt is the most crucial factor in determining the state of health of the Philippines economy. To this day, at least 40 per cent of the national budget is devoted to debt service. In recent years, through accounting sleight-of-hand, only about 18 per cent of the national budget is dedicated to debt service. In the 1998 national budget, only around P120 billion of P570 billion is allocated for debt service. But the reality is, for example, after the 1986 change from Marcos and during President Cory Aquino's time, debts incurred through the old Central Bank of the Philippines were separated and serviced through a "board of liquidators" in a newly organised Bangko Central ng Pilipinas.

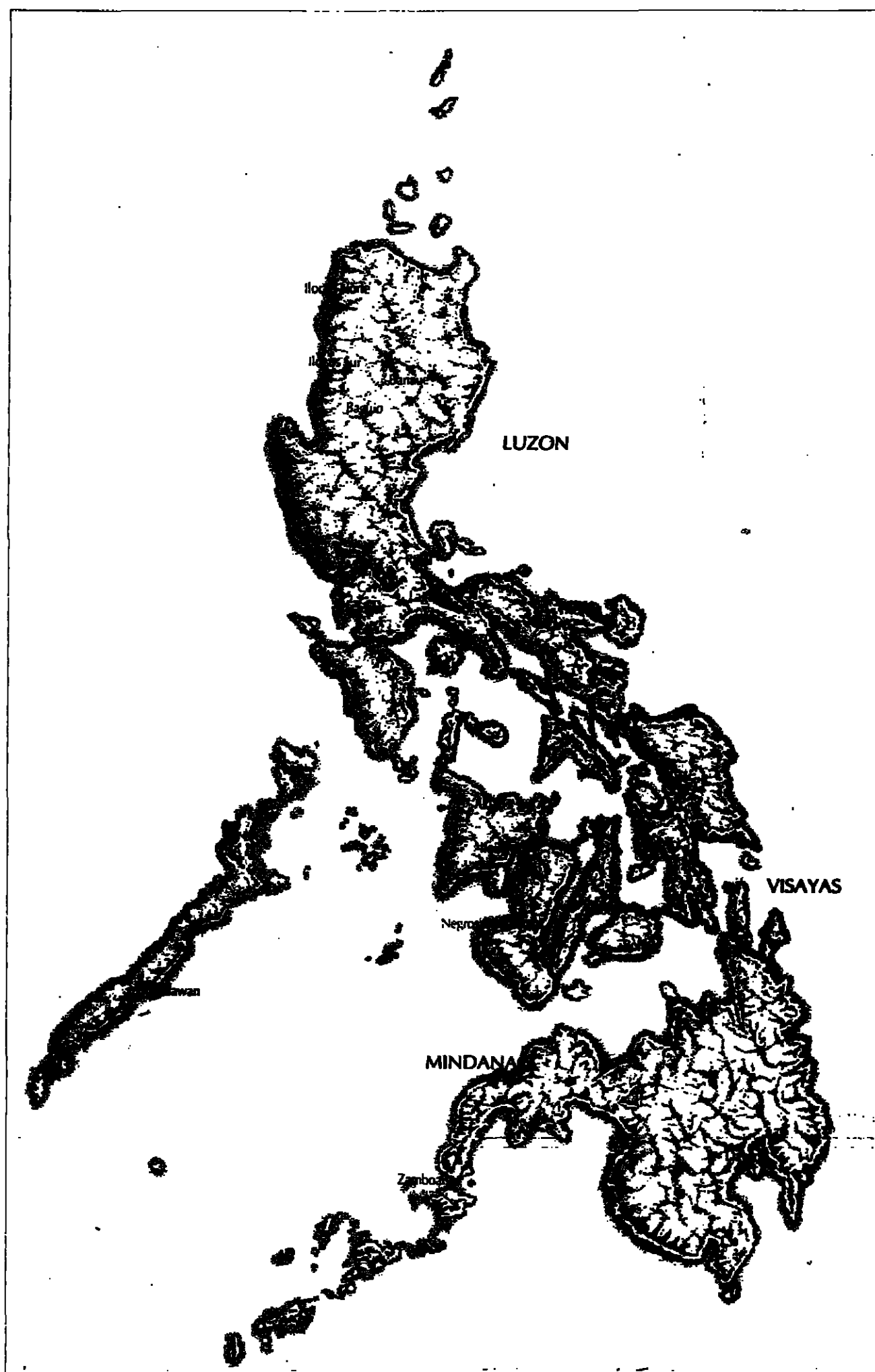
The Philippine foreign debt, like all Third World debt, has been repaid three times over through interest payments over 36 years. Yet, every year, the debt principal grows. With the IMF-WB-imposed economic and financial regime, no Philippine government has been able to survive without yearly infusions of today's equivalent of \$2 billion loans. Which explains the debt today, put by the IMF at \$52 billion. An historic opportunity was missed at the start of the Cory Aquino government in 1986, when the world stood in awe and sympathy for the People Power Revolution that toppled the old regime of Marcos and the financial debacle associated with it. Instead of crusading for debt reduction or condemnation, Aquino pledged to "honour all debts" incurred by the previous regimes, no matter how onerous and unproductive.

The Philippine economic crisis reached new heights under Fidel Ramos, as the West Point graduate-turned-politician committed his administration to a full implementation of the IMF's liberalisation, deregulation, and privatisation regime. Ramos converted the former American military bases to duty-free zones and duty-free shops, and smuggling mushroomed. In the former U.S. naval base, Subic Bay, the end result after six years of this regime was a \$500 million net trade deficit. The revenue losses to smuggling are incalculable, as, for example, in the case of cigarettes, where the estimated smuggled volume rose from 400 million cigarettes in 1986 to 16 billion by 1996. Following trade liberalisation, Ramos proceeded to reduce import tariffs and shifted tax burdens to consumers through a so-called Comprehensive Tax Reform Programme, which came to be known as a "deforum" programme where direct taxes were changed to more retrogressive indirect taxes.

To tide over the perennial fiscal and economic crises, the Philippines has relied on "export" (it would be more apropos to call it exile) of up to eight million Filipinos to work overseas in increasingly menial jobs. Estimates of remittances from Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs, for short) total between \$8-12 billion. But, with it, comes AIDS and a generation raised by absentee mothers or fathers, resulting in tremendous social dislocation, aggravating the illegal drugs problem and other social ills. Then, in 1997 the global financial crisis started unravelling in the region, causing the Philippine peso to drop a full 60 per cent in value relative to the U.S. dollar.

The Philippine stock market dropped 50 per cent from its peak of 3,400 points down to 1,700 points in the year since the first major devaluation of the peso began in 1997. GNP projections have declined from seven per cent to 2.5 per cent for 1998, primarily for an economy that has been lagging by a minimum of five per cent in growth annually for at least a decade, compared to the neighbouring countries. Since the Asian crisis began, the ranks of the unemployed have swelled to 4.1 million, not counting the under employed and the self-employed. Inflation shot up to 10.6 per cent from June 1997, and in the last seven months alone, prices of basic goods increased by 19 per cent.

Non-performing loans of the commercial banking system surged to 8.9 per cent, and doubled to P73.7 billion at the end of 1997 from the previous year's P34.2 billion. By the end of February 1998, this stood at P103.32 billion, up 40.2 per cent, and is expected to hit 12 per cent of the total loans in the system. This, despite the Philippine Central Bank's easing of the definition of bad loans, by exempting "all restructured loans fully backed up by collateral." Commercial loan growth dropped. Of 55 commercial banks in the country, Central Bank officials have admitted publicly that only 17 will survive as the Philippine banking crisis turns from bad to worse in the coming months. The adverse impact on Philippine banks from the Asian crisis has been delayed compared to neighbouring countries due to its comparatively negative ratings before the crisis



and, therefore, reduced exposure to offshore dollar loans.

The crisis was compounded by El Niño, which ushered in drought, and with Ramos's adherence to the IMF's preference for promoting high-value crops instead of rice, agriculture contracted by 3.3 per cent in the first quarter of 1998 on top of the contraction in 1997. Manufacturing, which was already contracting by two per cent previous to the Asian crisis, has contracted 11.8 per cent between April 1997-1998. Construction, hit by the bursting of the real estate bubble, has contracted by 60 per cent by some accounts. In the first quarter of 1998, vehicle sales, most of which are imported from

Japan, South Korea, and the United States, fell by 58 per cent. Wheat imports, much of it from the United States, have declined from 1.35 million tonnes last year to 1.34 million tonnes this year, although it had had a natural growth pattern before the crisis. The economic downturn was greatly induced by the fluctuating interest rates that have risen to as high as 40 per cent in the past two years, although this has been tapering off recently.

— Executive Intelligence Review

## Iraqi Kurd chief promises to compensate attacked Turcomans: Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — Iraqi Kurd chief Massoud Barzani has agreed to pay compensation to Turcomans, Iraqis of Turkish origin, whose goods were seized by his fighters, the Turkish foreign ministry said Friday. "Massoud Barzani, chief of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), said he is dismayed by the incidents and committed himself... to punishing the perpetrators of the attacks and paying compensation for Turcoman property," the ministry said in a statement.

Barzani agreed to recompense the Turcomans after a meeting with their representatives, the statement said. Turcoman groups said Wednesday that they were attacked by KDP peshmergas Monday night in the northern Iraqi city of Erbil. The Turkish foreign ministry also confirmed the attacks had been carried out and called for the perpetrators to be punished. The KDP and its rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, have jointly

ruled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the 1991 Gulf war.

Their partnership collapsed in 1994 because of disputes over power-sharing and tax revenue, mainly from the border trade. However, they have been observing a fragile ceasefire since October 1996.

The KDP has been allied with Turkey since May 1997 in its battle against the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), Turkish Kurds fighting for a homeland in southeast Turkey.

The PKK uses northern Iraq, or Iraqi Kurdistan, as a rear base for attacks on Turkish territory.

The 1-3.5 million Turcomans constitute the third largest ethnic group in Iraq after the Arabs and the Kurds.

The Turcomans live mainly in the KDP-controlled Erbil area and in the Iraqi-run northern provinces of Mosul and Kirkuk.

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## Arab Bank share price boosts AFM's general price index to 183.6 points

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Despite the noticeable decline in the turnover at the Amman Financial Market (AFM), the stock exchange's price index recorded a 2.6 per cent increase, the AFM's weekly bulletin indicated Friday.

According to the bulletin, the turnover amounted to JD4.59 million in the past week, a 71 per cent drop from the JD16 million posted during the previous week. It pointed that shares of 93 firms were traded during the week.

The bulletin showed that the general price index stood at 183.6 points at the end of last week, compared to 178.9 points, a 2.6 per cent rise over the previous week. The average daily turnover was down to JD1.3 million from JD3.2 million.

The biggest share of past week's turnover was in the banking sector which recorded a JD2.7 million of trading volume, mostly to the Arab Bank. The industrial sector came in second place with JD1.2

million, followed by the services sector with JD173.277 and finally the insurance sector with JD48.191.

The Arab Bank's share of the trading amounted to JD2.2 million, mostly by foreign investors who were encouraged to buy the bank's shares when the U.S.-based Thomson Bank Watch issued an AA minus credit rating for the bank last week, substantially higher than sovereign credit rating for Jordan.

The increase in the bank's share price by JD9, up to JD226.5 in the past week from JD217.5 a week ago, was a major factor that boosted the general price index in the past week, brokers said.

The Housing Bank ranked second after the Arab Bank, with a turnover amounting to JD354.674.

Trading in the industrial sector focused on the Arab Pharmaceutical Industry, which received JD255.457 of the total turnover, followed by the Arab Potash Company, JD243.458, the bulletin showed.

The Arab International

Investment Education ranked first among the companies which won the investors' attention in the AFM with a turnover amounting to JD64.151 followed by the Unified Company with a turnover of JD30.071.

Trading in the insurance sector, the weakest among the four sectors, focused on the Jordan French Insurance with a turnover amounting to JD30.411 followed by the Jerusalem Insurance with JD15.750.

The turnover in the organized market amounted to JD4.2 million while in the parallel market the trading amounted to JD337.947.

Among the firms that drew the investors' attention in the parallel market were the Arab German Insurance Company, with a turnover amounting to JD100.000 followed by the National Aluminium with JD35.924.

By Ahmed Naser  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Internet service providers (ISPs) in Jordan may not cut their rates after the government owned telecommunications provider introduced long awaited charges on data-communication circuits last week.

On Sunday, the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC) approved the Jordan Telecommunication Company's (JTC's) new international half-circuit tariffs, which were due in March.

In April, ISPs were provided access to international lines through Hashem I. Also, some ISPs decreased bandwidth leased through the JTC, while others did not renew their contracts altogether.

Web providers that started out with a 256K half-circuit to the United States used to pay JTC around \$20,000 a month, while paying mammoth global carriers like French Equant and United States MCI for an Internet port and an American half circuit, around \$10,000.

The JTC has now reduced its charge to \$6,750, for a 256K circuit, bringing the total cost to providers down to roughly \$15,000, similar to what ISPs pay for connection time through Hashem I.

And though meaning new

investors may look towards launching more ISPs, JTC's new international half circuit prices may not necessarily register Internet subscription declines.

Imad Ayoub, Global One's general manager, welcomed the tariffs, but said that there are "no decreases" because ISPs "were losing money before and now [they] can barely break even."

Marwan Juma, National Equipment and Technical Services manager, said that current subscription rates are at their lowest possible levels.

"If ISPs opt to offer lower rates, they will have no price cuts to offer customers later on along the road," warned Juma.

The current average for Web subscriptions in Jordan has reached a record low of JD12 for 30 hours of connection time. In the United States, giants like AOL provide unlimited connection time for \$20.

AOL has over 12 million subscribers — known as economy of scale in the industry.

Meanwhile, No ISP in Jordan can claim to have reached a level of economies of scale to this day.

Even ISPs like Global that boast a 6,000-strong subscriber base — are barely able to scrape an acceptable level of profit, conceded Ayoub.

Juma said that even if Jordanian ISPs gave deals like AOL's, subscribers would still have to worry

about local phone call bills, as an hour costs 600 fils after the JTC hiked rates in July.

Other aspects that should also be considered are congestion of local phone lines, added Juma. Unlike

conventional phone calls, where people chat for an average of five minutes a call, an Internet call lasts for an average of half-an-hour.

On the level of price structures, circuit costs

only constitute a third of any ISP's expenses, while the rest is dedicated to employee salaries, overhead and infrastructural equipment.

(Continued on page 10)

## Internet subscription rates will not be cut following new JTC prices

### REUTERS REUTERS

#### The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 15/07/98 18:44

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7994	1.5064	1.4658	1.5180	1774.90	2.0287	6.0318		
DE Mark	0.5567	1.0000	0.6373	0.8431	965.94	1.1276	3.3520		
GB Sterling	1.6183	2.9130	1.0000	2.4387	236.91	2.4568	2872.74	3.2843	9.7636
CH Franc	0.6638	1.1823	0.4096	1.0000	96.77	1.0159	1178.71	134.68	4.1348
JP Yen	0.0069	1.2340	0.4234	1.0328	1.0000	12.17	139.14	4.0009	
CA Dollar	0.6588	1.2916	0.4225	1.0566	1.04	1.0000	1270.80	1.4561	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0132	0.3477	0.8848	1219.51	0.8546	11.42	3.3944	
NL Guilder	0.4923	0.8865	0.3042	0.7420	71.79	0.7476	674.21	2.2636	
FR Franc	0.1689	0.2984	0.1024	0.2496	24.15	0.2517	33.65	33.6500	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7507	0.3770	3.6400	0.3074	3.6728	1518.00	3.4220
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2901	0.5317	5.1340	0.4335	5.1803	2141.04	4.8265
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1890	-	0.1005	0.57	0.0819	0.98	404.72	0.9124
Bahrain Dinar	2.56	1.8807	0.9483	-	9.66	0.8153	9.74	4028.74	9.0774
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.8844	1.01	417.03	0.9401
Kuwait Dinar	3.2636	2.3068	12.2034	1.2268	11.84	-	11.86	4938.99	0.9401
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	1.0208	0.9911	0.8837	-	413.31	0.9317
Lebanese/1000	0.86	0.4671	2.4708	0.2483	2.3979	0.2025	2.4195	-	2.2543
Egyptian	0.2822	0.2072	1.0964	0.1102	1.0637	0.0898	1.0733	443.60	-

Energy	Oil	Last	Review
Brent	0.00	0.00	
W. Texas	13.26	13.41	
Bonny	0.00	0.00	
Dubai	12.53	11.59	
UL Gas	133.00	132.00	

Period	-1	-3	-6	-12
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.6445	5.6875	5.7188	5.7481
GBP	7.8875	7.7383	7.7306	7.6719
JPY	0.5869	0.5863	0.5862	0.5862
DEM	3.4688	3.5000	3.6250	3.7578
FRF	3.6000	1.7969	1.8297	2.0313
CHF	1.7188	3.5625	3.6250	3.7900
ITL	5.0200	4.8940	4.8250	

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
New York	DOW JONES	8483.45	23.35	0.28	8456.57	8458.99	8459.5
New York	S&P 500	1072.9	-2.01	-0.19	1083.92	1071.42	1074.91
London	FT-SE 100	5488.4	39.3	1.56	5517.5	5434.9	5399.5
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	16123.93	-258.09	-1.68	16365.1	16049.5	16362
Paris	CAC 40	3994.91	43.22	1.09	4024.27	3973.11	3991.69
Frankfurt	DAX	5447.3	91.57	1.71	5483.16	5355.4	5356.23

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	117.58	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1878	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	2614	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	98	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	23.54	Spot
Tea (c/lbs)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	416	Spot

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.161	1.168
DE Mark	0.393	0.395
CH Franc	0.4727	0.4751
FR Franc	0.1173	0.1179
JP Yen	0.4814	0.4838
NL Guilder	0.3486	0.3503
IT Lira	0.3986	0.4006

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**Al Shurfa Bar & Terrace at Ammon Hotel opens**

AMMON HOTEL has celebrated the grand opening of its new Al Shurfa Bar & Terrace in a ceremony that was attended by the minister of tourism and archaeology and a number of high ranking diplomats. This step is part of Ammon Hotel's desire to become one of the capital's main entertainment hot-spots, due to its excellent location between the 4th and 5th Circles in the heart of Amman diplomatic district.

### THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Reprimand
- Thrust
- quenchers
- Destute
- Iron clothes?
- Ice-cream container
- Took the train
- Playwright
- Grandello
- Fraudulent event
- Author Bagnold
- Dilution
- substance
- Race of giant gods
- Schuss
- Surrender
- formally
- Butt
- Player by the net
- Writer Jong
- "Road to"
- French farewell
- Pay tribute
- Twisting turn
- Crocodile
- Reclay
- Alternative to lager
- Sgt. Biko
- Micrologists
- ODE's rival
- Seth's son
- Abu Dhabi, Dubai, et al.
- Without delay
- Lovingly
- Place for cargo
- Like broken horses
- Beethoven dedicatee
- of Man
- Merit
- Pie rut
- Shakespearean idiom
- NY Mets stadium
- Moves at a quick pace
- DOWN
- Mail event
- Critical point
- Leave out

By Alan P. Olachwang  
Huntington Beach, CA

4 Theater sections

5 Stake thrust

6 Rue the

7 aerobics

8 Vay out

9 Alfonso's queen

10 Group of six

11 Hypocrite

12 Chaplin's wife

13 Norse Zeus

14 Beatty film

15 Archaeological site

16 Concave

17 Last pitcher

18 Betty Ford

19 Cooking smell

20 Prospector

21 Mountain nymphs

22 Bridal path

23 Floss or

24 Vreeland

25 Uncanny

26 Subterfuges

27 Competitor

37 Passionate

47 Hangman's

48 Daystar

50 Skilled

51 Conger catcher

54 Comic Hartman

56 Fragrant blossom

56 podrida

57 Rapped

58 Best of fiction

59 Furto

60 Cool servers

61 Qualifying exam

62 Cravings

64 Triumphal exclamation

**Peanuts**

**Andy Capp**

**Mutt'n' Jeff**

**THE BETTER HALF.** By Glasbergen

**JUMBLE** THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Hervé Arnold and Mike Anglin

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

GOYGS

TEABA

TOPECK

NARTTY

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: HE WAS "GOYGS" TEABA TOPECK NARTTY

Yesterday's Jumbles: ORBIT DITTO JAGUAR BODILY

Answer: What the electrician gave his helper - A GOOD JOLT

**Business**  
A review of ne  
Sales tax, other  
seen as main fact  
MUNIR HAMARNEH, F  
of the economy, rece  
University of Jordan, rece  
program  
the subject  
the placement of f  
only the payment and fix  
the exchange rate, but fa  
during positive growth. "Se  
the financial and monet  
which were achie  
might have had effects on  
the consequences on  
the rate, he told an audie  
the headquarters of  
against PAF in Amman.  
he indicated that the bud  
was reduced through hi  
reduces, especially in  
Taxes and fees shot  
down in 1990 and by  
in 1992 without a st  
in 1992 adjustment  
the rate, Hamarneh said.  
the 1992 tax r  
have been using every s  
higher than the grow  
the gross domestic pr  
Hamarneh explained that  
the capital share of ta  
has been climbing co  
from JD2.2 in 1990  
to JD3.42 in 1992.  
This process, he con  
the reduced per cap  
the gross domestic pro  
from JD1.3 in 1990  
to JD1.7 in 1992.  
the profes  
HOROSCO  
CAST FOR SATURDAY, AUG  
Linda C. Black, Tribune Media  
March 21 to April 19) The  
discipline required to manage  
few weeks. It does not necessa  
to go broke. It could be quite  
up and down quite a bit in savings of  
time to make that decision.  
April 20 to May 20) It's  
your money, one of your fa  
Linda's favorite is probably  
in a going retrograde today and  
wouldn't pay off. Watch out  
May 21 to June 21) You  
Linda. You have good friends a  
you in the right direction.  
information confidential. A ch  
change of ages is about to take place  
celebrations. Congratulations!  
June 22 to July 21) Satu  
today in Taurus. This could ske  
you've been working on. Expe  
complications for a while. To spen  
a bunch of old projects instead of s  
you in trying to swim against the  
July 22 to August 21) Don't  
the next several months, that will  
in Taurus, is going retrograde  
and learn from it if you want to ac  
August 22 to September 2  
need could get in the way of yo  
In a way to get irritated, the jou  
complications you couldn't have  
steps this development is a blessing  
for person mess up your agenda.  
September 23 to October 2  
Say hi to you. Travel and ro  
Money is still tight, but vo  
There's plenty of fun, frie  
With all that going on, who  
Sagittarius (October 23 to Novem  
can't today to get the money you  
really deserve. It could be a loan  
ance policy or an IRA account. I  
of the above, you could check  
Sagittarius (November 22 to Jan  
the surprising surprises, has been  
year. You may have noticed it  
and your ability to spot the tru  
times will be more noticeable. You  
today through a manoeuvre s  
January 23 to February 2  
February 23 to March 21) You  
the money you were supposed to h  
you'll really take people by surpr  
to hear from you. And very p  
relationship will become a lot  
home with your sweetheart go c  
second one later, if the private con  
really interesting, you could put off the  
February 20 to March 20  
the success you've long desir  
ready to take advantage of an op  
should be practising now.  
Birthstone of August: Peridot - C



## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

## Sales tax, other indirect taxes and fees seen as main factors for economic slump

MUNIR HAMARNEH, professor of economics at the University of Jordan, recently said in a lecture that the economic adjustment programme has achieved some of its objectives, mainly the postponement of foreign debt repayment and fixing the dinar exchange rate, but failed to secure positive growth. "Some of the financial and monetary objectives which were achieved brought hard social effects and even harder consequences on the growth rate," he told an audience at the headquarters of the Communist Party in Amman.

He indicated that the budget deficit was reduced through higher revenues, especially from taxes. "Taxes and fees shot up since the early 90s as they jumped by 37 per cent in 1990 and by 41 per cent in 1992 without a suitable rise or adjustment in salaries," Hamarneh said. He added that since 1992, tax revenues have been rising every year at a rate higher than the growth rate of the gross domestic product.

Hamarneh explained that the average per capita share of taxes and fees has been climbing continuously from JD212 in 1990 to JD304 in 1992 and to JD342 in 1996. "This increase," he continued, "has reduced the per capita share of the gross domestic product form JD959 to JD617 in 1996." As such, the professor

pointed out, the actual income per person has become equal to half the income in the mid-eighties.

"The tax burden represented about 20 per cent of the gross domestic product in the 80s but in 1996 the tax burden is estimated at 36 per cent," he indicated. Noting that higher taxes and fees, especially the indirect ones and particularly the sales tax, has contributed to consecutive increases in prices, the lecturer stressed that that has reduced both public and private consumption as a result of lower purchasing power by the people and the cut in public spending.

He emphasised that the aforementioned factors have reduced demand for national industrial products and weakened the industrial capabilities to compete with foreign imports. Furthermore, "the standing of our products in outside markets was weakened and that has deepened the recession along with rising prices," he said noting that this situation has led to higher rates of poverty and unemployment (Al Dustur).

## JTC stands to increase revenue by year-end

By Ahmed Naser  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With new licenses and eight new value added services, the government-owned telecom provider stands to increase its revenues this year, according to telecom sources.

Last year, the Jordan Telecommunication Company (JTC) earned JD169 million in revenue, down from JD173 million in 1996.

In July, when the JTC lowered rates on international calls by 30 per cent, government officials charged that this would undermine JTC profits.

The JTC's new chairman, Ali Shukri, discredited this, saying that revenue would reach JD189 million by the end of this year.

Over the past few weeks, the JTC acquired three new licenses for fixed telephony, GSM mobiles and data

communications, and eight new value added services.

But most of the income will accrue from charges on JTC's international private leased line charges, down 27 and 53 per cent on foreign and Arab destinations respectively — retroactive from March.

Unlike the April tariffs, JTC's new charges are based on the standards of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and a 12 per cent price ceiling, according to a telecom source. ITU recommendations provide that profit ceilings not exceed 70 per cent of cost.

The new prices on international private leased (IPL) lines are expected to stimulate growth in the telecom market and give ISPs space to breathe.

"These prices will open a very large IPL (international private leased) line market for JTC," according to Hesham Khalaf.

According to the 1995 Telecommunication Law, companies and individuals wishing to lease IPL lines are not required to pay a fee of JD25,000 for a data-communications licence.

Potential customers for IPL lines would include banks, universities, regional offices, which currently rely on local ISPs, and embassies, said Khalaf, who established an IPL line sale venue for MCI in Egypt between 1994-97.

"We had [in Egypt] a new customer every week," continued Khalaf, adding that the availability of low cost IPL lines — and generally low cost communications in Jordan — would encourage regional offices to set up businesses in the Kingdom.

Another off-shoot of lowered international bandwidth prices is the growth of the local digital leased line market, where banks would establish nationwide networks, providing customers

with seconds-long money transfers, in comparison to the hours and even days long present delays.

Experts say that in the long run after Jordan transforms into a true communications hub, the country may have a chance of becoming a regional banking centre.

Khalaf also predicts that the JTC will have sold at least 20 megabytes of bandwidth by the end of 1999.

Web providers in the country — Global One, National Equipment and Technical Services, Index, Advanced Business Networking, FirstNet, JoinNet, Destinations and the National Information Centre — currently lease out a total of five megabytes of bandwidth, the majority of which comes through Hashem I. the uplink-downlink earth station run by His Majesty's Royal Communications

JTC's repertoire.

By acquiring bandwidth through the Royal Communications station, the JTC has also wiped out another fear, availability of capacity, according to a telecom source.

The Royal Communications earth station was recently upgraded to provide 34 megabytes of bandwidth, added the source who asked not to be named.

Each Megabyte of bandwidth can accommodate 64 concurrent phone calls or 256 Internet surfers, according to global standards.

These developments in Jordan's telecom sector preceded a number of expected developments in the region: a country code for Palestinian National Authority areas after the ITU's meeting in November, liberalisation of the Syrian telecom sector and Lebanon's effort to become a regional banking centre.

15/07/98	18/07/98
2.0227	8.0316
1.1276	3.3520
3.2843	9.7636
134.58	4.0009
139.14	4.1346
1.4551	4.3265
11.42	3.9644
33.6503	2.9666

LBP	EGP
1518.00	3.4220
2141.04	4.8255
404.72	0.9124
4028.74	9.0774
417.03	0.9401
4938.99	0.9401
413.31	0.9317
2.2543	
443.60	

CHF	JPY
0.4019	35.3520
0.41042	35.7051
4.90456	474.362
3.9984	335.37
2.8393	7.4227

Low	Fr Cts
8458.99	8458.99
1671.42	1671.42
5434.9	5434.9
15048.5	15048.5
3973.11	3973.11
8355.4	8355.4

Buy	Sell
0.708	0.716
1.151	1.158
0.393	0.395
0.4727	0.4751
0.1173	0.1179
0.4814	0.4832
0.3486	0.3502
0.3956	0.4005

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) There will be a little more discipline required to manage your finances for the next few weeks. It does not necessarily mean you're going to go broke. It could be quite the opposite. You could put away quite a bit in savings or pay a debt. This is a good time to make that decision.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) It's a good time to count your money, one of your favourite pastimes. Actually, Taurus' favourite is probably growing flowers. Saturn is going retrograde today and Pluto is going direct, so old skills pay off. Watch out for get-rich-quick schemes.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) You look absolutely marvellous. You have good friends coaching you and steering you in the right direction. Be careful about keeping information confidential. A change you've been planning for ages is about to take place, and you're making it happen. Congratulations!

**CANCER:** (June 22 to July 21) Saturn is going retrograde today in Taurus. This could slow down a group project you've been working on. Expect to have delays and complications for a while. To spend your time most wisely, finish old projects instead of starting new ones. No point in trying to swim against the tide.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Don't even attempt to change how things have always been done. Today, and for the next several months, that will be a futile effort. Saturn, in Taurus, is going retrograde. So, respect the past and learn from it if you want to achieve your goals.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 21) An older person's needs could get in the way of your travel plans for today. Try not to get irritated; the journey would have had complications you couldn't have foreseen. If you really need to make the trip, go ahead, but if you don't, perhaps this development is a blessing in disguise. Let an older person mess up your agenda.

**LIBRA:** (September 22 to October 22) This is a marvellous day for you. Travel and romance both look excellent. Money is still tight, but you might not need very much. There's plenty of fun, friendship and great conversation. There might even be a couple of pleasant surprises. With all that going on, who needs money?

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Fill out paperwork today to get the money you want, need and possibly deserve. It could be a loan application, an insurance policy or an IRA account. It's not clear what sort of money is involved. If you don't already have one or more of the above, you could check into those possibilities.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Pluto, symbolising surprises, has been in your sign for several years. You may have noticed it — your insight is keener and your ability to spot the truth and tell it borders on awesome. Today, with Pluto going direct, those abilities will be more noticeable. You could win a competition today through a manoeuvre so startling it surprises even you.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Do you have letters you were supposed to have answered by now? How about Christmas cards? If you send them out now, you'll really take people by surprise, but they'd be so tickled to hear from you. And very private matter also needs to get resolved. Tell somebody the truth, finally, and that relationship will become a lot more fun.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Should you stay home with your sweetheart go out and play with friends? It looks like you should do the first one first and the second one later. If the private conversation with the one you love, or the one you'd like to be in love with, is really interesting, you could put off the party altogether.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) Conditions are changing in your favour. It will be easier for you to achieve the success you've long desired over the next few months. A barrier is beginning to dissolve by itself. Get ready to take advantage of an opportunity when it presents itself, by improving your skills. That's what you should be practising now.

**BIRTHSTONE OF AUGUST:** Peridot — Golden Quartz

## Internet rates will not change

(Continued from page 9)

In late April, when ISPs were given access through Hashem I at rates 30 per cent cheaper than JTC's charges then, Web firm executives said that these discounts would be passed on as 10-15 per cent discounts to consumers. Some ISPs also started offering 50 per cent discounts on deals to students.

The new prices, however, will make it easier for ISPs to maintain a consistent level of quality and will shape competition between them on the basis of value added services, like extra e-mail addresses and Web space.

With the launch of two new ISPs this month — JoinNet and Destinations — there are now seven private ISPs in the country — Global One, National Equipment and Technical Services, Index, Advanced Business Networking, FirstNet.

Due to the market clutter, there were no figures available regarding the total number of subscribers.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET															
HOUSING JDC CENTER AMMAN - SUWEIDAT															
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179															
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (08/08/1998 - 12/08/1998)															
WEEKLY REPORT															
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS		COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE MARKET PRICE	NO. OF TRADING DAYS	
HIGH	LOW														
222.000	216.000	ARAB BANK	18.5	-88	142	9980	2113235	217.50	227.00	217.50	226.50	+9.00	221.767	113	4
1.660	1.440	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	35	37582	62006	1.65	1.65	1.45	1.45	-	1.650	089	4
3.000	3.000	CAYIRO AMMAN BANK	9.3	3.33	2	10000	30000	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	-	3.000	067	4
1.300	1.130	BANK OF JORDAN	0.00	0.00	18	14000	16067	1.13	1.14	1.14	1.14	+0.01	1.148	067	4
1.120	0.920	MID. EAST INV. BK.	63.1	0.00	20	23550	23930	1.04	1.03	0.95	0.96	-0.08	1.016	276	3
1.570	1.550	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	10.9	6.65	13	2675	4172	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	-	1.560	011	4
3.280	2.990	THE MOUNTAIN BK.	20.0	3.17	201	113549	354674	3.07	3.19	3.04	3.15	-0.08	3.124	114	4
1.900	1.830	JOR. EMMAT BANK	-	0.00	17	1198	2208	1.86	1.86	1.83	1.83	-0.03	1.863	008	4
0.650	0.400	JOR. GULF BANK	0.00	0.00	10	31125	18856	0.40	0.43	0.38	0.42	-0.02	0.406	156	3
1.780	1.700	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.8	0.00	38	13159	22643	1.70	1.74	1.71	1.74	-0.04	1.722	060	4
1.630	0.990	DIJON BK. SAV. INV.	156.2	0.00	1	300	294	1.03	0.98	0.98	0.98	-0.05	0.980	002	1
1.610	1.500	JOR. INV. FID. BANK	23.5	3.27	4	466	712	1.55	1.53	1.53	1.53	-0.02	1.528	002	2
0.870	0.820	REIT. AL-SAL. (REITRA)	4.0	0.00	5	800	651	0.82	0.82	0.80	0.82	-	0.814	004	3
BANKS SECTOR															
1.450	1.450	JERUSALEM INSUR.	9.5	5.71	3	11250	15750	1.45	1.40	1.40	1.40	-0.05	1.400	419	2
2.850	2.540	JOR. FRECH INSUR.	7.4	9.16	17	11300	30411	2.70	2.73	2.66	2.73	+0.03	2.691	514	6
1.160	1.130	HOLY LAND INSUR.	0.2	0.00	1	200	220	1.14	1.10	1.10	1.10	-0.06	1.100	010	1
1.540	1.370	JORDAN GULF INSUR.	-	0.00	3	1225	1810	1.47	1.49	1.42	1.49	+0.02	1.478	054	2
INSURANCE SECTOR															
1.600	1.520	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.1	5.32	42	16584	25472	1.54	1.55	1.52	1.55	+0.01	1.536	083	4
7.700	2.300	IBMT ELECTRICITY	14.4	4.24	3	450	1100	2.60	2.61	2.36	2.36	-0.24	2.464	015	3
2.370	2.270	WVCL. GORDON PWD.	8.8	5.58	5	2990	6735	2.74	2.72	2.15	2.15	-0.22	2.192	241	3
1.020	0.930	RAIL. PORTFOLIO	35.9	0.00	21	15950	14400	0.94	0.92	0.90	0.90	-0.04	0.902	319	2
0.810	0.780	REAL ESTATE INV.	15.5	0.00	4	1950	1545	0.79	0.80	0.79	0.79	-	0.792	041	1
6.000	5.700	ALRA-1	8.8	6.96	6	2500	14350	5.75	5.75	5.70	5.75	-	5.740	083	6
1.200	1.100	MID. EAST HOTELS	210.9	0.00	5	5660	6226	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	-	1.100	103	2
2.030	1.880	ARAB TVTL. TV. EDUC.	0.8	2.02	33	32450	64151	1.95	2.00	1.94	1.98	+0.03	1.977	160	6
0.960	0.890	JARBA EDUCATION	21.4	0.00	5	4325	4022	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	-	0.930	073	2
1.430	1.270	UNIFIED CO.	5.3	9.17	69	24350	30071	1.29	1.27	1.20	1.20	-0.09	1.235	487	6
0.600	0.560	UNION LAND DEV.	-	0.00	1	50	27	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	-	0.540	001	1
1.200	1.100	UNITED FOR FINAN. INV.	1.4	5.95	1	5000	5400	1.10	1.08	1.08	1.08	-0.02	1.080	250	1
SERVICES SECTOR															
2.040	1.840	JOR. CHEMIST FACT.	11.9	5.47	-76	64342	125523	1.93	2.03	1.90	2.01	+0.08	1.951	104	4
2.000	1.490	JOR. PHARMACY KIDDES	0.00	0.00	10	35504	60356	1.60	1.70	1.70	1.70	+0.01	1.700	081	2
5.000	4.800	ARAB POTASH CO.	24.4	4.04	14	50450	243458	4.90	4.95	4.75	4.95	+0.05	4.826	061	4
10.800	10.600	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.4	8.28	44	8846	94485	10.70	10.73	10.63	10.73	+0.03	10.681	138	4
4.700	4.500	JORDAN TANNING	7.6	8.51	6	3680	16934	4.60	4.70	4.60	4.70	+0.10	4.602	368	2
1.660	1.600	MOOLIN INDUSTRIES	12.0	6.63	7	4385	4745	1.65	1.10	1.05	1.08	-0.03	1.083	103	3
1.180	1.110	INDUSTRIAL COM. INVR.	0.00	0.00	4	6574	6458	1.10	1.08	1.06	1.07	-0.04	1.065	087	3
2.200	5.990	JOR. WASTED MILK	0.00	3.28	5	5%	3116	6.10	6.15	5.90	6.10	-	6.039	030	3
4.740	2.520	JAR. CHEMIST. HAFI	7.4	2.78	194	95484	255457	2.74	2.72	2.62	2.70	-0.04	2.675	151	4
2.550	1.310	JOR. CHEMICAL IND.	5.1	0.00	11	5100	6426	1.31	1.27	1.23	1.25	-0.06	1.264	066	3
2.740	2.740	JORDAN DAIRY	6.1	1.00	3	370	467	2.75	2.75	2.70	2.75	-	2.747	010	1
1.130	1.100	JOR. PIPES MANFACT.	9.1	9.09	10	10200	11243	1.11	1.12	1.10	1.10	-0.01	1.102	314	2
7.150	6.600	ARAB CHEM. ENTERP.	7.9	7.04	1	200	1420	7.10	7.10	7.10	7.10	-	7.100	030	1
5.440	5.200	DAR ALADAMA DV. INV.	6.8	6.19	36	9154	50117	5.48	5.71	5.42	5.65	+0.21	5.475	153	4
1.840	1.730	ALUM. IND.	13.7	13.51	6	7400	10440	1.73	1.85	1.76	1.85	+0.12	1.768	127	3
4.440	4.50	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	14.2	0.00	24	26210	11018	4.42	4.42	4.42	4.42	-0.01	4.420	795	3
0.810	0.770	ARAB PAPER CONV. IND.	23.7	0.00	4	10600	8586	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	-	0.810	302	1
0.460	0.440	NATIONAL INDS.	-	0.00	4	7900	3358	0.44	0.43	0.41	0.41	-0.03	0.425	132	2
0.410	0.380	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	-	0.00	9	3250	1247	0.38	0.40	0.38	0.40	+0.02	0.384	081	2
0.960	0.850	ORIV. CHEM. INDS.	0.4	9.78	1	450	550	0.85	0.82	0.80	0.82	-0.02	0.820	027	1
0.900	0.780	KATE-CABLE WIRE. INVC	37.0	0.00	32	43368	35058	0.83	0.83	0.79	0.79	-0.04	0.808	578	4
0.550	0.510	JOR. SULPHO. CO.	0.00	0.00	18	16650	8155	0.51	0.51	0.48	0.48	-0.03	0.490	370	3
1.310	1.240	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	14.2	4.65	38	31047	39762	1.31	1.30	1.27	1.29	-0.02	1.281	421	4
0.450	0.390	KAWTHAR INVEST.	-	0.00	112	16650	40801	0.45	0.53	0.45	0.53	+0.08	0.497	483	4
0.830	0.730	INV. MOON. INDUS.	11.0	0.00	8	70	3119	0.74	0.69	0.69	0.69	-0.04	0.694	086	2
0.570	0.520	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	-	0.00	20	39624	21288	0.55	0.55	0.52	0.52	-0.03	0.537	495	3
1.300	1.200	EXCEL. CHELORINE	8.8	0.00	32	93550	114487	1.21	1.25	1.22	1.25	+0.04	1.224	1299	4
0.780	0.730	JOR. NBN CABLE CO.	9.9	14.29	50	30450	21559	0.73	0.73	0.70	0.73	-0.03	0.708	381	4
0.1250	0.1350	EX. -SAY READY WEAR	40.5	0.00	3	5200	5980	1.17	1.15	1.15	1.15	-0.02	1.150	069	3
1.040	0.980	TVTL. INDUS.	6.8	6.83	9	420	418	0.99	0.97	0.97	0.97	-0.02	0.974	082	2
0.990	0.870	ORIV. CHE. & VERG.	9.7	0.00	13	5275	4551	0.87	0.88	0.86	0.88	+0.01	0.863	107	3
0.990	0.870	JORDAN STEEL	9.6	8.14	19	10103	25760	0.86	0.87	0.85	0.86	-	0.856	701	4
0.590	0.570	KTD. EAST. CEMENT	10.1	0.00	26	35150	19954	0.58	0.60	0.56	0.56	-0.02	0.568	160	1
0.770	0.770	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	52.1	0.00	2	5250	4838	0.77	0.95	0.92	0.95	-0.02	0.922	088	3

# Bordeaux coach Baup calls for caution

Tatarkova entered the draw on Wednesday when France's Mary Pierce was forced to withdraw due to a right groin strain.



Top seed Amanda Coetzer of South Africa advanced by beating Japan's Nana Miyagi 6-3, 6-3. Coetzer meets Austria's Barbara Schett in the quarter-finals.

injuries by playing in international events such as the Olympics or world championships.

Asked if they were interviewed about EPO, a banned drug which increases oxygen in the blood and which Guandalini's shop is suspected of selling to sports teams,

Shane 10:00 p.m.

Reservations call: 46-40155, 46-25155

McLaren  
head as  
Schumacher  
tases

...Coulthard led  
...Mercedes team-  
...Mika Hakkinen in  
...practice Friday for the  
...Grand Prix.  
...Michael Schumacher  
...stood in his Ferrari.  
...Schumacher, who trails  
...by 16 points in  
...Formula One drivers'  
...needs to win  
...lap race to  
...hopes of overtak-  
...by the end of

...who is coming  
...back victories  
...and Germany.  
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the fastest time in  
any of the practice ses-  
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... afternoon was dry  
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...n't fast enough.  
...s for Coulthard.  
...ished behind

and is third in the  
standings, 34 points

senal facing

100% (AFP) —

1. who won only the  
2. table in English foot-  
3. game last season.  
4. the defence of their

... but it is  
... United who  
... new campaign as

who kick off the 38-match programme with a home game

Leicester City on  
finished 1947/98  
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... who face  
William Forest at home

...were unbeaten in the league from start and overtook to take the title with

...the 12-match streak which culminated in the 4-0 home win over Everton.

are only seconds this time with commentators and that manager Arsene

...failure to rein-  
...squad over the  
...will allow United  
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Champions'

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Ferguson, bolstered  
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...signing of  
first-class players —  
defender Jaap Stam  
...winger Jesper  
...Wenger made

...major signing.  
...full-back Nelson  
...squad is a mix-

...ing stars (Tony  
Steve Bould, Martin  
Lee Dixon, Nigel  
Burn, David Seaman)  
...lately in

...inexperienced  
... (Nicolas Anelka,  
... Wreh, Stephen  
... Matthew Upson).  
... a handful of ...

...of players  
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TODAY AT	<p>CINEMA TEL 5947911</p> <p><b>PHILADELPHIA 1'</b></p> <p><i>Leonardo DiCaprio...in</i></p> <p><b>THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK</b></p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL 5947911</p> <p><b>PHILADELPHIA 2'</b></p> <p><i>Comedian Adel Imam .. in</i></p> <p><b>AL ZA'EEM</b></p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL 5699238</p> <p><b>PLAZA</b></p> <p><i>Comedian Adel Imam .. in</i></p> <p><b>AL ZA'EEM</b></p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30</p> <p><i>Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30</i></p>	<p>CINEMA TEL 5677420</p> <p><b>CONCORD</b></p> <p><i>CONCORD TEL</i> <i>Adel Imam &amp; Yusra... in</i></p> <p><b>LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR</b></p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 6:00, 10:30</p> <p><b>RELIC</b></p> <p>Shows: 3:30, 8:30</p> <p><i>CONCORD TEL</i></p> <p><b>BABY'S DAY OUT</b></p> <p>Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL 5947911</p> <p><b>GALLERIA 1</b></p> <p><i>ABDOUN</i> <i>www.cns.com.jo/Galleria</i></p> <p><i>Comedian Adel Imam .. in</i></p> <p><b>AL ZA'EEM</b></p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30</p> <p><i>Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30</i></p>	<p>CINEMA TEL 5947911</p> <p><b>GALLERIA 2</b></p> <p><i>ABDOUN</i> <i>www.cns.com.jo/Galleria</i></p> <p><i>Rahm Williams &amp; Matt Damon...in</i></p> <p><b>GOODWILL HUNTING</b></p> <p>Shows: 12, 3, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>AL ZA'EEM</b></p> <p>Shows: 10:30 p.m.</p>	<p><i>Hisham Yanes Theatre</i> <b>TEL: 4625155</b></p> <p><b>STARTING JULY 13TH</b></p> <p><b>The Authority in the Service of the People</b></p> <p><i>Starring Hisham Yanes and the group</i></p>
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## McLarens ahead as Schumacher chases

**BUDAPEST (AP)** — David Coulthard led McLaren-Mercedes teammate Mika Hakkinen in free practice Friday for the Hungarian Grand Prix, with Michael Schumacher close behind in his Ferrari.

Schumacher, who trails Hakkinen by 16 points in the Formula One drivers' standings, needs to win Sunday's 77-lap race to have any hopes of overtaking the Finn by the end of the season.

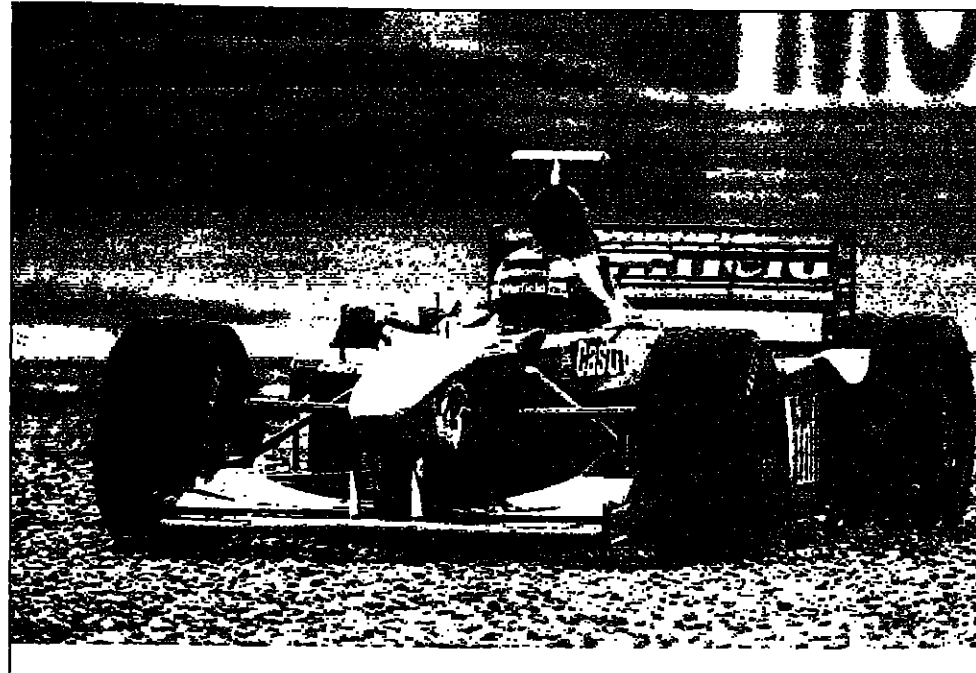
Hakkinen, who is coming off back-to-back victories in Austria and Germany, appeared ready for the challenge.

He had the fastest time in the morning's practice session, during which the cars were slowed down by a summer shower.

The afternoon was dry and Hakkinen vaulted over Schumacher late in the one-hour session.

He wasn't fast enough, however, for Coulthard, who finished behind Hakkinen in the two last races.

Coulthard is third in the drivers standings, 34 points



Canada's Jacques Villeneuve drives through the gravel August 14 after spinning off the track during the first time trial for Sunday's Formula One Grand Prix. Villeneuve clocked only the 10th fastest time with 1:40.140 minutes (Reuters photo)

behind Hakkinen, who has 76. Schumacher has 60. A victory is worth 10 points.

With five races left in the season, Schumacher doesn't have much time to achieve his goal of winning his third Formula One championship and becoming the first Ferrari driver to clinch the title since Jody Scheckter in 1979. Schumacher's previous two titles were in different cars.

After a disappointing fifth place in the German Grand Prix, Schumacher spent the past week testing on Ferrari's home track in Fiorano, covering 1,200 kilometres.

"This afternoon showed that we are in much better shape than in Hockenheim," Schumacher said. "The gap to the front runners is not too big."

And although his gap to the McLaren was not huge, it was clear that his rivals go into Saturday's qualifying with an advantage.

On Hungary's narrow, winding 3.9-kilometre circuit, overtaking is very difficult and good grid position could be a decisive factor.

Coulthard posted a best-lap time of one minute, 19.989 seconds.

Hakkinen was .197 seconds behind, with Schumacher .450 off the pace.

Reigning world champion Jacques Villeneuve of Canada was fourth in a Williams, just two-thousandths of a second slower than Schumacher.

Eddie Irvine, the second Ferrari driver, was fifth, while former champion Damon Hill was sixth in a Jordan.

## Grand Slam winners play like champions

**MASON (AP)** — Three reigning Grand Slam champions played at elite levels here Thursday to reach the quarter-finals of the \$2.2 million ATP Championships.

Australian Open holder Petr Korda, Wimbledon winner Pete Sampras and reigning U.S. Open champion Pat Rafter breezed to victories in this hardcourt tuneup for the U.S. Open, which begins in New York on August 31.

Pete Sampras, needing to defend his crown here to reclaim the title of World No. 1, beat fellow American Jan-Michael Gambill 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 in 73 minutes. He next faces another American upstart, Vince Spadea.

"I certainly hope I've had a positive influence on young guys growing up," Sampras said.

Third seed Korda of the Czech Republic rallied for a 5-7, 6-4, 7-5 triumph over Croatian Goran Ivanisevic while Aussie Rafter, seeded fifth, outlasted 31st-rated American Todd Martin 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Korda's quarter-final foe is Rafter, who will defend a massive 1,400 ranking points over the next three tournaments. Rafter lost his first set in a fortnight after winning the Canadian Open but gradually imposed his serve-and-volley attack game on Martin.

While Sampras would like to reclaim the top ranking spot he lost to Chile's Marcelo Rios on Monday, his principal task here is preparation for the U.S. Open, which begins August 31 in New York.

"The Open is my main goal. I'm going to give it my best shot," Sampras said.

Sampras hopes to make tennis history in New York by capturing a 12th career Grand Slam title, which would match the record held by Australian Roy Emerson.

Ivanisevic, who Sampras defeated six weeks ago in the Wimbledon final, suffered a setback loss. He served for the match leading 5-3 in the third set but Korda, 30, fought back for the break and repeated the feat two games later to take a 6-5 edge.

Korda let out a scream of joy as he drove a forehand home for the winner a game later to advance to the quarter-finals.

An all-Swedish quarter-final was set as Magnus Larsson beat Germany's Tommy Haas 6-4, 6-4, and Thomas Johansson beat Frenchman Jerome Golmard 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/2).

## Arab Junior Swimming Championships Jordan adds 2 bronze medals

By Roufan Nabhas  
Special to the Jordan Times

**AMMAN** — Jordan's team Friday added another two bronze medals at the 5th Arab Junior Swimming Championships taking up the Kingdom's tally to two gold, one silver and five bronze medals.

The Kingdom's boys Under-13 4x100m relay team took the bronze medal clocking 4:43.20. Egypt came first with 4:08.12 and Oman came second clocking 4:11.93.

By press time, another Jordanian bronze was secured by the boys Under-15 team in the 4x100m relay clocking 4:15.31. Egypt took the gold with 3:52.39 followed by Syria with 4:06.86.

Meanwhile, organisers cancelled the diving competition Friday for lack of participants, with only Kuwait and Iraq registering for the event.

Jordan's Hana Majaj Thursday captured the second gold medal for Jordan in the 100m butterfly in the Under-17 category. Majaj earlier secured the Kingdom's first gold medal in the 200m butterfly.

The Kingdom's other medals were secured by the girls Under-14 team who won a silver medal in the 4x100 freestyle relay while their Under-16 teammates won a bronze in the 4x100 freestyle relay.

Jordan's Sadeq Damrah won a bronze medal in the 100m breaststroke on the opening day of the event in which 12 countries are taking part in swimming and water polo.

Egypt seems to have a piece of the pie in each event leading overall team standings with 39 gold, 38 silver and 23 bronze medals. They seem likely to remain in first place in the event which concludes Sunday.

Following Friday's competitions, Jordan's coach Ali Nawwas commented: "I am sure that we could have done better and secured more medals."

"Hana Majaj is an excellent swimmer and we should take better care of our exceptional swimmers," he added.

Meanwhile, unlucky Omar Dallal who came in 4th place in four events and registered a new Jordanian time in the 200m breaststroke admitted



Egypt's Shatha Abu Ismail on her way to a win in the breaststroke event (photo by Abdullah Ayyoub)

that he should learn from his mistakes.

"I have committed a couple of technical mistakes and I am learning," he told the Jordan Times.

"I will now prepare myself for the Pan-Arab Games and I hope to get in shape and have better timing," he added.

A mother of four, Muna Dallal stressed the family's role in preparing their sons and daughters for a championship.

"We suffer a little for them but we do enjoy it. We always feel proud of them," Dallal told the Jordan Times.

In the Under-13 category, Algeria's Raouf Ben Obaïd took first place in the 100m butterfly clocking 1:02.60 followed by Egypt's David Demian with 1:03.28 and teammate Karim Othman third with 1:03.53. Jordan's Saher Al Rabadi came in seventh place.

In the Under-15 category, Lebanon's Rula Al Hares took the gold in the 200m clocking 2:30.77 followed by Egypt's Yasmeen Abu Alez in second place with 2:31.51 and teammate Shrouq Shinawi third with 2:35.18.

In the Under-13 category, Algeria's Sabria Demian came first with 2:36.93 in the 200m. Egypt's Suha Hamad was second with 2:39.06 and teammate Mai Ra'fat was third with 2:40.44. Jordan's Sandi Zraïq came fourth clocking 2:51.71.

Algeria's Sufian Dayed came first in the 200m breaststroke with 2:28.19 followed by Egypt's Aymen Kahtab with 2:29.34 in second place and teammate Waleed Radwan third with 2:34.09. Jordan's Omar

Only three teams are taking part in the water polo competition: Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

The August 10-16 championships groups swimmers from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Algeria, Oman, Iraq, Syria, Qatar, Tunisia, Palestine, Morocco in addition to Jordan.

## Arsenal facing tough task to ward off United challenge

**LONDON (AFP)** — Arsenal, who won only the sixth double in English football history last season, begin the defence of their Premiership crown this weekend — but it is Manchester United who start the new campaign as favourites.

United, who kick off the gruelling 38-match programme with a home game against Leicester City on Saturday, finished 1997/98 without a trophy while the Gunners swept all before them in a stunning finale to the season.

Arsenal, who face Nottingham Forest at home on Monday, were unbeaten in the league from November and overtook United to take the title with a magnificent 12-match winning streak which culminated in the 4-0 home win over Everton.

But Arsenal are only second favourites this time around with commentators fearing that manager Arsene Wenger's failure to reinforce his squad over the summer will allow United to regain the title they had won in four of the previous five seasons.

Arsenal, like United, face a marathon campaign on two major fronts: the Premiership and the European Champions' League.

But while United manager Alex Ferguson, bolstered his already star-studded squad with the signing of two world-class players — Holland defender Jaap Stam and Sweden winger Jesper Blomqvist — Wenger made just one major signing, Argentine full-back Nelson Vivas.

Wenger's squad is a mixture of ageing stars (Tony Adams, Steve Bould, Martin Keown, Lee Dixon, Nigel Winterburn, David Seaman) and relatively inexperienced youngsters (Nicolas Anelka, Christopher Wreh, Stephen Hughes, Matthew Upson).

Only a handful of players could be considered at the peak of their careers (Dennis Bergkamp, Marc Overmars, Ray Parlour, Emmanuel Petit, Patrick Vieira).

Wenger's persistent claims that English clubs will always struggle in Europe so long as the existing domestic structure is maintained make it all the more bizarre that he has stayed out of the transfer market while his main rivals — United, Chelsea and Liverpool — have all been spending heavily.

It was precisely United's lack of cover in key positions — exposed by an injury crisis in the second half of the season — which

allowed Arsenal to overhaul them for the title.

Arsenal were generally lucky with injuries last year but with the average age of their back five 35, they are ever more vulnerable to strains and pulls.

United, meanwhile, have greater reason to be confident despite losing 3-0 to Arsenal in last Sunday's curtain-raising Charity Shield at Wembley.

Ferguson has strengthened his defence with the club record signing of Stam for £10 million pounds while the arrival of left winger Blomqvist from AC Milan will allow Ryan Giggs, United's most attacking threat, to assume a more influential role down the middle.

But perhaps the biggest boost for United has been the return from a career-threatening knee injury of Republic of Ireland's combative and inspirational midfielder Roy Keane, whose absence for eight months last season arguably cost United the title.

United spent the summer desperately trying to buy a world-class striker but were rebuffed in attempts to land AC Milan's Patrick Kluivert and Aston Villa's Dwight Yorke.

And it is in attack that they might struggle despite all the creative talent in a mid-field of Giggs, David Beckham, Paul Scholes and Keane.

Teddy Sheringham suffered an alarming dip in form in the second half of last season while Andy Cole still misses a stack of chances and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is still to establish himself as a truly world-class player.

The most potent challenge to Arsenal and United seems set to come from Liverpool and Chelsea — just as it did last season — and both have been active in the transfer market in the close season.

On paper, it is difficult to find a better team in the world than Chelsea's and their first choice line-up could read: De Goey (goalkeeper), Petrescu, Desailly, Leboeuf, Le Saux (Defence), Di Matteo, Wise, Poyet, Laudrup (midfield), Casiraghi or Vialli, Flo or Zola (attack).

The challenge for player-manager Gianluca Vialli will be to rotate his squad of cosmopolitan all-stars into a cohesive, happy unit, though there are already rumblings of discontent among the players who fear that they may not get regular

first-team football.

Liverpool, meanwhile, merely need to put one name down on their team-sheet to have opposition quaking in fear: Michael Owen.

This time last year barely anyone had ever heard of him, but after a stunning first season and a sparkling display at the World Cup, the 13-year-old goal sensation has rapidly established as one of the most formidable players in the world.

When England striker Robbie Fowler, just four years his senior, returns from injury towards the New Year, Liverpool will be able to field one of the deadliest strike forces in the Premiership.

Liverpool have also strengthened their defence with the signing of Norwegian international Vegard Heggem from Rosenborg. South African-born striker Sean Dundee from Karlsruhe and Irish defender Steve Staunton.

After narrowly avoiding relegation last season, Tottenham and Everton have both regrouped and are unlikely to struggle this time round.

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